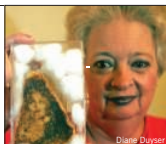


STARS AND STRIPES®

**Iraqi troops
praised for
Fallujah role**

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Diane Sawyer with what she says is an image of the Virgin Mary

**'Blessed'
sandwich nets
\$28K on eBay**

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Guard Reggie Miller, left, and coach Rick Carlisle

**Pacers' title
hopes dealt
serious blow**

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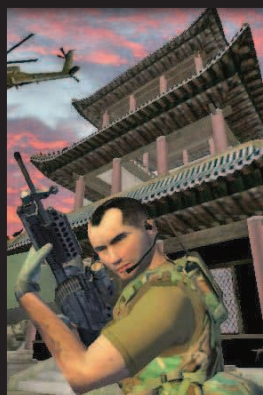
Volume 2, No. 227 © EPSS 2004 MIDEAST EDITION WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2004

Coalition forces launch offensive south of Baghdad

Raids by 5,000 Americans, Brits, Iraqis target insurgents Page 3



TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT LIMITED/AP



Courtesy of Red Storm Entertainment

How far is too far?

Heading into the holiday buying season, furor over controversial video games reaches new heights Page 11

Left: The online game "JFK Reloaded" from Glasgow, Scotland-based Traffic Management Limited simulates the events of Nov. 22, 1963. Players can pretend to be Lee Harvey Oswald and "assassinate" President John F. Kennedy. "It's despicable," said David Smith, spokesman for Sen. Edward Kennedy, the late president's brother. Above: South Korea's Media Rating Board has refused to approve "Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 2," which bases its scenarios on a U.S. conflict with North Korea, saying it goes "way too far."

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Dangerous medicines: New reports accuse another drug company of being too slow to pull a dangerous medication from the market and question the ability of the federal Food and Drug Administration to protect the public from such risks.

This time it's Baycol, a cholesterol-lowering medicine that Bayer AG withdrew in 2001 after some people who took it developed a severe and sometimes fatal muscle disorder. A new study found that the risks were far greater than had been believed. The study concludes that today's top-selling cholesterol-lowering drugs, called statins, are very safe, but could be risky when taken with other drugs called fibrates by older people with diabetes.

Six papers on the issue were released Monday and will be published Dec. 1 in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Robert Blake murder trial: Prospective jurors being interviewed for the Robert Blake murder case were warned that they will have no DNA evidence, no fingerprints and no eyewitnesses and will have to judge the actor entirely on circumstantial evidence. Jury selection began six days ago and Deputy District Attorney Shelle Samuels has been setting the stage for Blake's trial in Los Angeles that will enter the evidentiary phase Dec. 6.

Samuels has said that there is no way to link Blake to the gun that killed his wife, Bonny Lee Bakley, in May 2001.

Political eavesdropping: A federal judge has denied a request by former Virginia House of Delegates Speaker S. Vance Wilkins to be removed from a lawsuit stemming from a Republican eavesdropping scandal.

U.S. District Judge James R. Spencer on Monday also denied a request by the state Republican Party to limit the amount it might have to pay in the lawsuit brought by 33 current and former Democratic General Assembly members.

The lawsuit against the GOP, Wilkins, his former chief of staff Claudia D. Tucker, former state GOP executive director Edmund A. Matricardi III, and former state chairman Gary Thomson stems from a 2002 incident in which Matricardi eavesdropped on two Democratic conference calls. He pleaded guilty to felony eavesdropping in 2003.

The civil case is scheduled for trial on Dec. 9.

Insulting radio host: A Madison, Wis., radio host apologized Monday for calling secretary of state nominee Condoleezza Rice "Aunt Jemima," but refused to back down from his criticism that she is a "black trophy" of the Bush administration.

John "Sly" Sylvester, the program director and morning personality on WTDY-AM, wrote a letter of apology to local newspapers.

"I'm concerned that I have offended many African-Americans by using a class term to describe an incompetent, dishonest political appointee of the Bush administration. I apologize," wrote Sylvester, who is white.

Sylvester wrote he would not, however, apologize for criticizing Rice, saying "she has allowed herself to be used as a black trophy by an administration."

Darfur drought: Sudan's Darfur region, already engulfed in a conflict that has forced 1.8 million people to flee their homes, faces a new threat — a drought that has all but wiped out this year's harvest, the top U.S. aid official says.

Andrew Natsios, head of the U.S. Agency for International Development, said farmers who stayed on their land during the



Chinese airliner crash: Rescuers continue their search Monday for the black boxes at the site of a crash of a China Eastern Airlines plane in Baotou, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. The death toll from the crash rose to 55 after the body of a second person killed on the ground was found. Investigators have found no evidence of terrorism or other "man-made destruction" after the plane exploded after takeoff and plunged into an ice-covered lake.

21-month conflict are now beginning their major harvest, but they're expected to reap just 10 percent to 15 percent of the normal yield.

"They have enough production from this crop to last perhaps until March, but certainly not until the end of December" 2005, when the next harvest will be completed, he said.

The estimate by the International Committee of the Red Cross "means an 85 percent crop loss," says the subject to another assessment by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, Natsios said.

Business

Dollar hits new low: The U.S. dollar slid to yet another new low Tuesday against the euro, which rose to \$1.3093 after a weekend meeting of the world's top finance officials failed to send any signal that governments were preparing action to stop the dollar's slide.

The European currency broke the previous record of \$1.3074, set Thursday, in early afternoon trading.

Banker banned: Former star technology banker Frank Quattrone, convicted on criminal charges of obstructing justice, has been barred from the securities industry for life by regulators for allegedly failing to cooperate in an investigation of his activities.

The National Association of Securities Dealers, the brokerage industry's self-policing group, announced Monday that its National Adjudicatory Council had permanently banned Quattrone from the industry, overruling a January decision by a hearing panel to suspend him for only a year.

World

Allegations of abuse: The United Nations is investigating 150 allegations of sexual abuse by peacekeepers in Congo, a disturbing sign that efforts to rid the so-called "blue helmets" of such misconduct in recent years haven't worked, officials said Monday.

The allegations include pedophilia, rape and soliciting prostitutes, said Jane Holl Lute, assistant secretary-general for peacekeeping operations. Similar claims have been made against peacekeepers working under the U.N. mandate in the past.

"It's important that those missions be above reproach and adhere to a standard of conduct which not only we have a right to expect, but the people in these circumstances themselves have a right to expect," Lute said.

The allegations in Congo started coming to light in the spring, and formal investigations have begun in several cases, she said.

There are allegedly photographs and video footage backing some of the claims.

North Korea food aid: North Korea will need food aid for more than 6 million people next year, as a harvest shortfall and soaring prices in fledgling private markets leave most families unable to get enough to eat, U.N. agencies said Tuesday.

The report by the World Food Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization came amid efforts to restart stalled six-nation talks on U.S. demands for the North to give up its nuclear ambitions.

Floods in the Philippines: Flash-floods caused by a typhoon left 11 people dead in the northeastern Philippines on Tuesday, among at least 60 killed in the storm.

Typhoon Muifa hit over the weekend, capsizing boats and toppling trees and utility lines on the main island of Luzon. Forty-nine people were killed and 67 people, most fishermen, were missing.

A military helicopter rescued three injured children Tuesday from flooded shorelines and about 14,000 people were evacuated from their homes.

The typhoon blew westward on its way toward Vietnam on Monday, as another tropical depression made landfall, causing more flooding along the eastern coast.

Madrid bombing memorial: A glass dome etched with messages of condolence has been chosen as the design for a memorial to victims of the Madrid train bombings.

Mayor Alberto Ruiz-Gallardon and Development Minister Magdalena Alvarez announced the winning bid Monday from among 289 proposals.

The 66-foot tall dome design was presented by a Spanish architectural firm.

The structure will be built outside the Atocha rail station, one of the targets in the March 11 attack that killed 191 people and wounded more than 1,500. The bombings on four commuter trains were blamed on Islamic militants linked to al-Qaida.

Engraved on the dome will be messages of condolence that Spaniards wrote in letters and signs left at makeshift memorials at Atocha and two other stations in the days after the attack.

An association representing victims asked that the messages of condolence appear instead of victims' names to show "valued the hope of a better future."

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

5,000 U.S., Iraqi British forces launch offensive south of Baghdad

BY TIM TRIN
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Some 5,000 U.S. Marines, British troops and Iraqi commandos launched raids and arrested suspected insurgents Tuesday in a new offensive aimed at clearing a swath of insurgent hideouts south of Baghdad, the U.S. military said.

In other violence, masked gunmen assassinated a Sunni cleric north of Baghdad — the second such killing in as many days — and insurgents in U.S. company with a roadside bomb near the central Iraq city of Samarra, prompting the Americans to open

fire, killing an Iraqi hospital officials, said.

The new offensive was the third large-scale military assault this month aimed at suppressing Iraq's persistent insurgency ahead of crucial elections set for Jan. 30.

The region of dusty, small towns south of the capital has become known as the "triangle of death" for the frequent attacks by car bombs, rockets, and small arms on U.S. and Iraqi forces there and for frequent ambushes on travelers.

The military said violence has surged in the area in recent weeks in an apparent attempt to

A U.S. tank burns on the back of a transport truck after it came under attack on a highway in Baghdad on Monday.

divert attention away from the U.S. assault on Fallujah.

The joint operation kicked off with early-morning raids in the town of Jabella, 50 miles south of Baghdad, netting 32 suspected insurgents, the U.S. military said in a statement. U.S. and Iraqi forces were conducting house-to-house searches and vehicle checkpoints.

In the past three weeks, Iraqi troops and Marines have detained nearly 250 insurgents, the statement said.

They have been aided by British forces from the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch Regiment, who were brought to the area from southern Basra to aid U.S. forces in closing off militant escape routes between Baghdad, Babil province to the south and Anbar province to the west.

The massive Fallujah invasion — involving some 10,000 U.S. and Iraqi troops — has left the former guerrilla stronghold mostly in U.S. hands, though fighting with pockets of gunmen has been going on for days, the military has said. More than 50 U.S. service-members were killed and more than 400 wounded in the operation.

Earlier this month, the northern city of Mosul witnessed a mass insurgent uprising in apparent support of Fallujah's guerrillas.

But a boycott by Sunni Arabs — who make up an estimated 20 percent of the nearly 26 million population — could deprive the new government of legitimacy.

The slain Sunni cleric, Sheikh Ghulib Ali al-Zuhairi, was shot as he left a mosque in the town of Muqadiyah, 60 miles north of Baghdad, said police Col. Raisan Hussein.

Al-Zuhairi was a member of the Association of Muslim Scholars, an influential group that has called for a boycott of nationwide elections.

Earlier, gunmen assassinated another prominent Sunni cleric in the northern city of Mosul — Sheikh Faith Mohamed Amin al-Faidhi, who was the brother of the group's spokesman. It is unclear whether the two attacks were related.

Meanwhile, a top aide to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr accused the government of violating terms of the August agreement that ended an uprising by al-Sadr's followers in Najaf.

Ali Smeisni, al-Sadr's top political adviser, made no explicit threats as he leveled his allegations at a Baghdad news conference.

But his remarks raised the possibility of a new confrontation between the government and al-Sadr's Mahdi Army militia, which rose up against the Americans and their Iraqi allies in April and August.

Smeisni said the government has broken a promise in the August agreement not to arrest members of al-Sadr's movement and to release most of them from detention.

The government, however, started pursuing them and their numbers in prisons have doubled, Smeisni said. "Iraqi police arrested 160 al-Sadr loyalists in Najaf four days ago."

Smeisni also accused the government of conspiring with two major Shiite parties, Dawa and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, to marginalize al-Sadr's movement and prevent its clerics from speaking in mosques.

Trouble from al-Sadr's armed followers would further complicate the security situation ahead of the January vote.

The United States is eager for the election to go ahead as planned, hoping that an elected government widely accepted by the Iraqi people will take the steam out of the insurgency still raging in Sunni areas of central, western and northern Iraq as well as the capital.

But a boycott by Sunni Arabs — who make up an estimated 20 percent of the nearly 26 million population — could deprive the new government of legitimacy.

The majority Shiites, believed to form 60 percent of the population, strongly support elections.

Still, Iraq's interim prime minister expressed confidence Monday that the election will succeed. Ayad Allawi said he believed that only a "very small minority" would abstain during the election.

As the election approaches, U.S. commanders in Iraq probably will expand their troops by several thousand. Army units slated to depart are also being held back until after the election. There are now about 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

In Egypt, where 20 nations have gathered for an international conference on Iraq, members have committed themselves to supporting the U.S.-backed Iraqi interim government and its war against insurgents.

The gathering, which included many who had opposed the war, represented a hard-won acknowledgment of the need for international cooperation to deal with its consequences.

U.S. injured tops 9,000

WASHINGTON — The number of U.S. troops wounded throughout Iraq since the Fallujah offensive began Nov. 7 has surpassed 850, and the wounded total for the entire war has topped 9,000, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

In its weekly report on casualties the Pentagon said 9,326 U.S. troops have been wounded since U.S. forces invaded Iraq in March 2003. That's an increase of 370 from the previous week, reflecting not only the battles in Fallujah but insurgent attacks in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities.

The wounded total has increased by 868 since the outset of the Fallujah offensive and by 1,039 since Nov. 1. The Pentagon has not given a comprehensive report on the number of American forces killed since the start of the Fallujah attack, but officials said last week that at least 51 had been killed and 425 wounded.

Iraq's political parties

BAGHDAD — Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission said Tuesday that 156 political parties have been approved to run candidates in the Jan. 30 general election.

They included the Iraqi National Accord party led by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and the new party of President Ghazi al-Yawer, called the Iraqi Party, said a spokesman. Farid Ayar said in a statement.

Ayar said 212 parties applied for certification but 56 were rejected for failing to meet criteria. Among the parties approved was the Iraqi Islamic Party, a Sunni group that had threatened to boycott the election to protest the U.S.-led offensive against Fallujah. The party later decided to participate.

Group enters Fallujah

GENEVA — The first independent aid group to enter the Iraqi city of Fallujah after two weeks of heavy fighting said a mostly deserted city but was able to help a few civilians contact relatives outside, the Red Crescent said Tuesday.

The Iraqi National Guard told the aid convoy that at least 100 civilian families remain in Fallujah, a city with a usual population of 300,000, said Dr. Said Ismail al-Haqi, director of the Iraqi Red Crescent.

"It is a deserted town," al-Haqi said. He said the convoy Monday didn't see anyone who needed medical attention and left Fallujah before 5 p.m. on the instructions of the U.S.-led military forces.

"We had seven ambulances, but there was no one there to be evacuated," al-Haqi added. "We were told it's already been done."

He said the military had apparently provided the key to the first independent relief group to enter the city since U.S.-led forces invaded two weeks before.

U.S. military officials have said they did not aid group for security reasons during the first two weeks of the fighting.

From The Associated Press

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Monday, at least 1,228 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 95 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is two higher than the Defense Department's tally, which was last updated Monday at 10 a.m. EDT.

The British military has reported 74 deaths, Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,090 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 846 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A U.S. soldier died Monday of wounds suffered in an attack in Baghdad the night before.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Marine Cpl. Bradley T. Arms, 20, Charlottesville, Va., died Friday in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to the Marine Corps Reserve's 4th Combat Engineer Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Baltimore, Md.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Demarius D. Brown, 22, Martinsville, Va.; died Friday in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

■ Sgt. Jack Bryant Jr., 23, Dale City, Va.; died in an attack Saturday in Muqadiyah, Iraq; assigned to 3rd Brigade Fire Support Team, 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Vilseck, Germany.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Michael A. Downey, 21, Phoenix; died Friday at National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md., from wounds received Nov. 11 in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

■ Marine Cpl. Joseph J. Hendon, 22, Santa Maria, Calif.; died Saturday at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, from wounds received Nov. 10 in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Joseph T. Welke, 20, Rapid City, S.D.; died Saturday at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, from wounds received Friday in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

VA chief vows care for 'wounded heroes'

Bound for Afghanistan, Secretary Anthony Principi visits injured at Landstuhl

BY BEN MURRAY
Stars and Stripes

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Emerging from a meeting with injured troops at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the Department of Veterans Affairs' top official vowed Monday to work for the timely delivery of benefits to America's "wounded heroes."

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi spent more than an hour meeting with about 20 troops at the hospital in a brief stop on his way to Thanksgiving in Afghanistan.

Afterward, he spoke about the need to take care of soldiers wounded in the war on terrorism. Principi said he was heartened by the morale of the troops recovering at Landstuhl, and would work "to make sure that the VA takes care of them" when they separate from the military.

But the VA faces a massive task in trying to quickly funnel health benefits to troops recently wounded or disabled in Iraq and Afghanistan. In a letter to The Washington Post last month, Principi said his office receives more than 60,000 new benefit claims each month, and at any given time has more than 250,000 claims being processed.

The government's second-largest agency also has come under fire for the amount of time it takes to process claims.

Working through the complicated separation and claims process can take months for separating troops, prompting the VA to expand its services in 2001 and begin its "seamless transition" initiative last year to streamline the VA processing procedure.

That initiative included efforts to improve communication between the VA and the Department of Defense, the addition of extra benefits counselors and internal VA moves to ensure that troops wounded in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom receive priority care.

"They've earned those benefits, and I want to ensure they get them," Principi said.

The VA's 2001 expansion of services has made a big difference to troops passing through the Landstuhl hospital, according to Jerl York, officer in charge for the seven-member VA staff at Landstuhl.

As of Tuesday, 20,802 troops have been treated at Landstuhl since they received in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

York said that the predesigned



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi talks in the lobby of the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany, after he visited with wounded servicemen who are hospitalized there.

program available at Landstuhl allows separating troops to work through the claims process while still in Germany, allowing them to circumvent most of the ponderous VA central claims system,

based in Washington, D.C.

"In the States, processing can take up to a year," York said. But working through the Landstuhl program allows separating troops to receive benefits in as little as

60 to 100 days, he said.

"We can essentially write the award and the benefit starts flowing then," he said.

E-mail Ben Murray at: murrayb@mail.estripes.com

Last stop in Iraq provides comfort for military patients

BY RON JENSEN
Stars and Stripes

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq — The warfighter had been blinded in combat and he wanted to call his mother before leaving Iraq.

Capt. Grisel Rodriguez, a clinical nurse at the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility, dialed the number for him.

"It's not always about giving medication," he said. "He got to talk to his mom."

Another soldier simply wanted his face washed, fearing small shards of the glass that wounded him still were in his hairline. Rodriguez dampened a cloth and obliged.

"That, to me, is nursing," she said.

The last piece of Iraq that many wounded GI's may see is at the CASF, a canvas facility on the flight line at Balad Air Base. It's where sick, injured or wounded warriors are monitored and prepared for the next leg of their journey.

They come to the CASF from every military medical facility in Iraq by helicopter, airplane or convoy. Some come from the Air Force Theater Hospital 14 miles away at Logistics Support Area Anacosta, the Army's side of the same sprawling base.

"We stage them until the next flight, which can be anywhere from 12 to 48 hours," said Master Sgt. Nancy Peck.

Some flights are regularly scheduled, but when the need arises, Peck said, more flights are added.

"Our main job is to ensure they get the best care possible while they're here," said Lt. Col. John Lopardi, the commander.

The staff of 60 includes two flight doctors who make shifts of 24 hours, 24 hours off. The nurses spend their 12-hour shifts providing needed medications to their charges and ensuring they are pain free.



RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Patients leaving from the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility at Balad Air Base, Iraq, are often treated to some music from Lt. Col. Kevin Philpot, left, commander of the 332nd Civil Engineer Squadron, and Senior Master Sgt. Richard Heft, a squadron member. The CASF is the last place many troops see in Iraq.

They keep an eye out for a patient whose condition worsens to the point he shouldn't be on a flight.

Lopardi said a young patient "started to go south" just two nights earlier but was quickly given CPR, stabilized and still made the scheduled flight.

During the recent offensive in Fallujah, the CASF was swamped with patients. During the battle, about 425 U.S. troops and 43 Iraqi soldiers were wounded. More than 50 U.S. servicemen died from the fighting.

"I've never given so much morphine in my life," Rodriguez said.

Peck said, "As soon as we would empty our beds, the hospital would send them over to empty their beds."

The recreation area was turned into a ward — couches out, beds in.

"We were bursting at the seams here," Lopardi said.

During those times, the CASF needed help. Lopardi said. Volunteers mainly help to carry litters — from helicopter to a bus, from a bus to the CASF, from a bus to the airplane.

One of the 150 volunteers currently will-

ing to work is 1st Lt. Glen Smith, deputy airfield operations officer for the 332nd Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron. He stopped logging in his volunteer hours one month ago, he said.

"That's not why I'm here," he said.

Some nights, he's needed for 15 minutes. Other times, he might spend several hours at the facility.

"It keeps it real," he said of his time helping wounded troops.

The CASF staff is out of MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., coming from several specialties.

"I didn't know what a CASF was," said Rodriguez. "As a (trauma) nurse, I said I didn't know."

Before shipping out to Iraq in September, the team prepared for its deployment at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. It will remain until January.

The brief time spent with the patients is heartwarming and humbling, team members said. The soldiers and Marines tell them how good it feels to sleep on a pillow or take a shower.

"The best medicine for these patients is communication, just talking," said Lopardi. "They want to talk about what happened."

"Oh, my God, the stories they tell," said Rodriguez.

Hearing tales of life in the midst of combat, she said, makes her appreciate her life at Balad Air Base, with its air-conditioned rooms, hot showers and relative safety.

The effort has validated her Air Force career, she said, completing the missing piece in the puzzle. She owes that, too, she said, to the people who pass through her facility.

"They're our heroes," she said.

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GI who died in Iraq refused to avoid war

BY CAROLYN THOMPSON

The Associated Press

WEST SENECRA, N.Y. — When a call to active duty interrupted National Guard Spc. David Roustum's final semester in college, his Syrian-born father suggested he could avoid combat by going to Syria.

"I would send you," the father offered.

"Dad, I would never do that. This is my country and I will do whatever it takes," was Roustum's reply, his now-grieving father recalled Monday after learning Roustum had been killed in Baghdad.

"That tells you the kind of person he was."

Military officials told Russ Roustum and his wife, Jennifer, that their youngest son died in an ambush Saturday. At least three other soldiers from Roustum's 108th Infantry Regiment were wounded, the family said.

Three of the injured soldiers' mothers came to the Roustums' suburban Buffalo home Sunday to say they believe David Roustum, 22, saved their sons' lives.

"Two of them are severely injured but the other one was able to talk to his mother," Russ Roustum said.



Roustum

not surprise him. His son, Roustum said, was a leader who played quarterback for his Orchard Park High School football

The Roustums, who live in West Seneca, had no other details on the ambush, nor did a spokesman for the Army National Guard in Albany. The Department of Defense had not yet confirmed the death Monday.

Russ Roustum said the message from the soldiers' mothers did

team and captained the club hockey team the year it went from last place to first.

Roustum, who followed his older brother into the military, had been months away from finishing an accounting degree at the University at Buffalo when he was sent to Iraq in March.

At the high school Roustum attended, flags flew at half-staff Monday and students and staff observed a moment of silence after being told of Roustum's death over the public-address system.

"David was an outstanding student, athlete, soldier and human being," said the principal, Robert Farwell.

Jones: Some NATO members' lack of aid in Iraq 'disturbing'

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The failure of all NATO-member nations to participate in the alliance's new training mission in Iraq is "disturbing," according to Marine Gen. James Jones, the alliance's top operational commander.

NATO allies agreed on Nov. 17 to approve a mission to send up to 300 military instructors, as well as guards and support staff, to Iraq as part of a mission to train the country's nascent military.

But only 16 of the alliance's 26 member nations have agreed to actually participate in the operation.

The others, including Germany and France — both of whom vigorously opposed the Bush administration's determination to prosecute the war in Iraq to begin with — have refused to send troops to participate in the mission.

Such recalcitrance "is disturbing," said Jones, who is Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, during a luncheon address at the National Press Club on Tuesday.

It is important that once NATO decides to take on a mission, "all allies support it," James said. "When nine, 10, or 11 countries in the alliance will not send forces," Jones said, "the burden falls on the other 14" members to complete the task.

While Jones said he hopes the Iraq situation will be "a one-time issue," the possibility of similar situations "is something that has to be discussed and given a full airing."

Jones mentioned instances in which NATO as a whole might agree to a mission which then receives only partial member support as part of a series of "potential obstacles to [NATO's] transformation."

Other problems, Jones said, in-

clude the dwindling military budgets of many European countries, especially in Western Europe.

"Over 50 percent of nations in NATO spend 2 percent or less of their Gross Domestic Product on national security issues, which includes international security," Jones said. "Not having a predictable, stable investment base" to depend on, especially as military budgets continue to decline, will make it difficult for NATO to modernize for the future, he said.

The United States spends 4.7 percent of its gross domestic product in 2004 on national security, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Jones also said that an excess of restrictions, or "caveats," on how NATO forces may be employed once they are on a mission is a burden on commanders.

"Zero [caveats] is not possible," Jones said. "But we can certainly do better than we've done."

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Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari listens during the opening session of a meeting of foreign ministers in Iraq and neighboring countries in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on Monday.

Iraq: U.S. role crucial to success of elections

BY SALAH NASRAWI

The Associated Press

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt — Iraq told an international conference Tuesday that U.S.-led military operations in the war-ravaged country are essential to allowing all people to vote in January national elections. And it received broad global support in the process.

World leaders also discussed the upcoming Palestinian elections on the side of the conference, with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan saying the Jan. 9 polls provided an opportunity to revive the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

But Iraq took center stage, with Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari telling the conference that security was the key concern in staging his country's Jan. 29 elections. He also defended the American-led multinational force in Iraq, which is widely seen in the Arab world as an army of occupation.

"The contribution of the multinational force is essential to help secure necessary conditions for voting and to support our security forces in stabilizing the country," Zebari said.

Zebari addressed representatives of 20 nations, including Iraq's six neighbors, and bodies such as the Group of Eight, the

European Union and the Arab League, who came to this Red Sea resort to discuss Iraq's future. The two-day conference, which ended Tuesday, was attended by states that had opposed the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq but now recognize the need to contribute to its reconstruction.

"We must guarantee that all sectors of the Iraqi electorate have an equal chance to cast their vote — free from intimidation, terror and fear spread by an extreme minority," Zebari said of this month's campaign waged against insurgents in Iraqi cities such as Fallujah and Mosul.

"The campaign in Fallujah was a difficult decision, taken after extensive negotiations, but the last course of action after all peaceful and political avenues of dialogue had been exhausted."

The conference rebuffed calls from France and some Arab states to set a deadline for withdrawing the U.S.-led forces. But the final communique, which was approved unanimously, said pointedly that their mandate was "not open-ended."

The communique condemned "all acts of terrorism in Iraq," referring particularly to the kidnappings and assassinations of foreign and Iraqi civilians, aid workers, diplomats and journalists. It urged the interim government to deal firmly with terrorists, but also to avoid hurting civilians.

White House orders study on paramilitary operations

BY KATHERINE PFLERGER SHRADER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House has requested that the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon study whether the Defense Department should take over CIA paramilitary operations, as recommended by the Sept. 11 commission.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and then-acting CIA Director John McLaughlin rejected the idea — McLaughlin quite vociferously — when the commission issued its final report this summer. Bush's request indicates that the administration wants to give the issue closer study.

"The president asked that we look at this to understand and address the specifics of this issue," Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said Monday.

Both Whitman and a U.S. official, who also confirmed the study on the condition of anonymity, stressed that the work is being done collaboratively. The study is still in its early stages.

The review comes as Congress has reached an apparent stalemate over other sweeping recommendations from the commission that investigated the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, including the creation of a new national intelligence director.

Within its 40-plus recommendations, the commission recommended the transfer of the CIA's paramilitary operations to the Defense Department. The commissioners said having two such organizations within the government to handle such operations was redundant.

Paramilitary operations can include a host of activities, including training rebel forces; destabilizing governments and organizations through violence; and directly attacking enemy targets and individuals. The operations can be handled by CIA paramilitary teams or units out of the Pentagon, such as the Green Berets or Delta Force.

Pentagon and intelligence leaders have said CIA paramilitaries and military special operations forces have distinct capabilities, but work well together.

Some nibbling away at the CIA's domain is already under way. Recent legislation would give the U.S. Special Operations Command up to \$2.5 billion to support "foreign forces, irregular forces, groups or individuals" that help U.S. efforts against terrorists and other enemies. Such aid — which could mean cash, weapons or other assistance to often shadowy groups or figures — has traditionally been handled by the CIA.

Bush signed the measure into law last month.

AP Military Writer Robert Burns contributed to this story.

Iraqis praise for role in fight for Fallujah

Analysts say nationals still unprepared for independent operations

By PATRICK J. MCDONNELL

Los Angeles Times

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Upon his triumphant entry into this former rebel bastion following a U.S.-led assault, the American chief of the operation singled out Iraqi troops for special tribute.

"Iraq needs leaders like you," Army Gen. George W. Casey declared last week to the U.S.-trained officers arrayed before him. About 2,000 Iraqi soldiers, police and special forces fought alongside 10,000 U.S. Marines and soldiers in the battle for Fallujah.

The Iraqi's role was comparatively modest in what was clearly a U.S. show, but top American commanders were upbeat about the results.

For one thing, there have been no mass desertions since the operation began Nov. 8, unlike what occurred during an aborted Marine assault on the city last spring. Many members of Iraqi security forces walked away from the earlier fight, embarrassing officials with the U.S. occupation.

This time around, U.S. officials say the Iraqis were especially useful in unearthing intelligence, identifying non-Iraqi insurgents, clearing homes of enemy fighters, searching for weapons caches and staffing humanitarian aid sites. At least one specialist trained police unit, working with U.S. "mentors," was used to storm several mosques.

"The Iraqis have been a tremendous asset," said Maj. Gen. Richard P. Natonski, commander of the 1st Marine Division.

Privately, though, some commanders and experts on military issues said they were less than confident that Iraqi troops were ready to take on a more independent role in providing security for the country.

"The big test is when the Iraqis have to do something like this by themselves — and not with Marines helping them out," said one U.S. officer who was involved in the Fallujah assault. "Let's see how they get from point A to point B then."

That the Iraqis' role was limited in the large-scale operation was not surprising. Iraq's army, once the largest in the Middle East, remains a work in progress that lacks manpower, weapons, training, air power and armored units.

Although the three Iraqi battalions fighting here had been battle-tested in clashes with insurgents, only one attacked independently, commanders said. The others were directly attached to U.S. units. Even the quasi-independent battalion was guided by U.S. advisers and was part of a larger command reporting to a Marine colonel.

"They can't do what we did here by themselves," acknowledged Army Maj. Hunter Floyd, a senior adviser to one of the Iraqi battalions deployed here. "They don't have tanks. ... They don't have the armor that we

have. But they're getting there. The master plan has all that stuff."

An Iraqi force that is able to undertake such operations on its own may be a long time coming, said Andrew Krepinovich, an expert in counterinsurgency warfare and executive director of the Center for Strategic Budgetary Assessments in Washington.

"The tension is, can the indigenous Iraqi forces take on a large enough role in the defense of their own country before the U.S. Army begins to run into severe problems with respect to recruiting and retaining soldiers?" And right now, it looks as though it's going to be quite some time.

Casualty figures underscore the comparative roles of the two forces in Fallujah. U.S. troops suffered far more casualties — 51 killed in action and 425 wounded — than their Iraqi counterparts, authorities said late last week. The fighting left eight Iraqi soldiers dead and 43 wounded.

Iraqi troops interviewed here displayed great pride about their part in the operation, eagerly recounting their exploits.

Staff Sgt. Adel Ahmed led a reporter to a spot outside a yellow schoolhouse in central Fallujah. There, he said, his troops had

finished off a fighter carrying Syrian identification. The Iraqis pointed to a protruding mound of earth behind the school where, he said, the Syrian was buried.

"We are fighting to save our Iraq from foreigners and terrorists," Ahmed declared.

Many Iraqi fighters here are former peshmegas, as Kurdish guerrillas were known. For many Kurds and Shiiites, long repressed by the regime of Saddam Hussein, there is a special satisfaction in fighting to crush a Sunni Arab stronghold where many people still support the ousted president.

"We are fighting to save our Iraq from foreigners and terrorists."

Staff Sgt. Adel Ahmed

Iraqi soldier

works, notably that of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the notorious Jordanian militant said to have operated out of Fallujah.

"They see a lot of things we just pass over," said Marine Capt. Ken Gardner, an Arabic speaker who has been working with Iraqi troops here. "They'll look underneath some books or some innocent-looking papers and find lists of fighters for moq (mujahedeen) cells or foreign-fighter cells. They found a lot of stuff."

Times staff writers Emma Schwartz in Washington and Janet Stobart in London contributed to this report.

Marines try to mend fences in broken city

In Fallujah, focus is on building relationships

By EDWARD HARRIS

The Associated Press

FALLUJAH, Iraq — "Imagine it's your mother!" an Iraqi man shouted, demanding the Marine open a bridge north of Fallujah so an ailing woman can get medical treatment.

Capt. Alex Henegar winced but handled the complaint, using the type of on-the-fly diplomacy Marine officers believe can assuage angry Iraqis and draw them in to support the rebuilding of the city, devastated by the recent U.S. assault.

With rebels largely routed, Marines hope insurgent intimidation campaigns will be curtailed and that U.S. forces will be able to forge new relationships with Iraqis and poor development funds into the city to cement military gains.

"This leaves us ahead. It's hard to imagine, I know, because of the destruction. But things had been backsliding for months," said Henegar, a civil affairs officer attached to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.

"This has allowed us to start over. We no longer have a haven of chaos in the heart of Iraq. In some cases, we need to break things down in order to start over," said the 30-year-old from Lookout Mountain, Ga., and a recent graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. "Security is a necessary condition for everything else."

At the scene at the bridge, Henegar promised the crowd that if it allowed the first post-assault humanitarian shipment to pass unimpeded, he would ask his superiors for permission to open the bridge permanently.

The Iraqi crowd nodded until an Army soldier angered by mortar fire coming from the ailing woman's village shouted at the interpreter. "Tell them as long as they're shooting at us, the bridge stays closed!"

"Whether they articulate it or not, everyone has a theory about what works" said Henegar, who was able to get the woman to medical care.

Marines say the restive Sunni Triangle, including Fallujah, is a particularly nettlesome environment for the development projects meant to win over Iraq's people.

Following an aborted Marine attack in April, rebels took over the city, which the U.S. military says became a locus for the bombings, ambushes and kidnappings plaguing the country.

Now, with dead bodies scattered over a devastated city nearly devoid of its 250,000 civilians, U.S. forces are turning to reconstruction efforts ahead of elections scheduled for Jan. 30.

Any success in calming the insurgency around Fallujah could be used as a model elsewhere in the country, they hope.



A U.S. Marine walks through the deserted western part of Fallujah, Iraq, on Nov. 15. Hoping to use any success in Fallujah as a model elsewhere in the country, troops are now focusing on rebuilding the city's infrastructure. They hope the work will help build trust with local residents.

"If this (Fallujah) is a success story, then the message will be to get rid of the terrorists militarily and you're back on track," said civil affairs Lt. Col. Leonard De Francis.

The U.S. forces plan to refurbish Fallujah's electrical grid and water-treatment facility, clear its roads of rubble and inspect buildings for structural soundness — and at least one military estimate says civilians won't return until February.

Together, the Iraqi government and U.S. military have set aside \$178 million for immediate repairs.

Further out, there is \$1.2 billion in long-stalled funds earmarked for Anbar province, part of the \$18.4 billion in U.S. taxpayer funds that Congress approved for rebuilding Iraq.

Officers say rebels intimidated many Fallujah residents, taking over homes and executing those who resist — stymieing U.S. efforts to spend money on people in and around the city.

"No amount of money I could have paid them would have allayed their fears," said Henegar. "The insurgents would simply say, 'We'll cut off your head.' What's more compelling?"

In an initial, post-attack trust-building exercise, Henegar arranged with a local imam to have men from a nearby village help in removing the bodies of the estimated 1,200 insurgents killed in Fallujah since the Marine-led assault began Nov. 8.

The Marines hope the grisly task can establish relationships with local Iraqis needed as partners in reconstruction — and turn up leaders to help in the effort.

"The very first, most basic thing is engagement, building relationships. But the challenge is picking the right people with whom to engage. We really can't just reach down and pick leaders," Henegar said.

Specialist LaAndrea LaMarque. 54B Chemical Specialist. U.S. Army Reserve

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IN THE STATES

Relatives stunned by murder-spree suspect

By ROBERT IMRIE

The Associated Press

HAYWARD, Wis. — Relatives of a man being held in the deadly shooting of six deer hunters say they are just as stunned and bewildered by the incident as authorities investigating the case.

Thick glass prevented Chai Vang from any contact with family members during a brief visit Monday at the jail. They spoke via telephone, mixing English with the native language of Hmong immigrants from Laos.

"I still don't believe it," the suspect's brother, Xang Vang, said. "He is one of the nicest persons. ... Maybe something provoked him or something."

Charges had not been filed against 36-year-old Chai Vang, of St. Paul, Minn., as of Tuesday morning.

Death toll rises to six in Wis. attack on hunters

Vang is accused of opening fire on several hunters Sunday with a semiautomatic assault rifle. Five people were killed and a sixth died Monday; two others were wounded.

"I just don't think any of this makes sense," Sawyer County Sheriff James Meier said.

Meier told reporters a dispute over Vang's use of a tree stand on private property preceded the gunfire. Killed were Robert Croteau, 42; his son Joey, 20; Al Laski, 43; Mark Koldt, 28; and Jessica Williams, 27.

Denny Drew, 55, died Monday at St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield, his family announced. Willers' father, Terry Willers, remained hospitalized Tuesday in fair condition,

while the other wounded hunter was released late Monday or early Tuesday.

Officials said the victims were part of a group of 14 or 15 who made their opening-weekend trip to Robert Croteau's 400-acre property an annual tradition.

When two or three hunters spotted a man in their hunting platform in a tree on Croteau's land, one of the men approached the intruder and asked him to leave.

"The suspect got down from the deer stand, walked 40 yards, fiddled with his rifle. He took the scope off his rifle, he turned and he opened fire on the group," Meier said.

One of the men called for help on his radio, but it was too late. The gunman fired

again, hitting the people who had just arrived on all-terrain vehicles, authorities said.

He was "chasing after them and killing them," Deputy Tim Zeigle said. "He hunted them down."

It is unclear whether anyone returned fire. The members of the hunting party had only one gun among them. Someone in the group wrote down the suspect's hunting license number.

Investigators said Vang was cooperating.

Some Hmong leaders questioned whether racial differences may have figured in the shootings; authorities have not determined a motive.

Sang Vang said his family was devastated, and that his brother has lived in the United States for more than 20 years and is a U.S. Army veteran.

Clues sought in Houston jet crash

By JUAN A. LOZANO

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — A private jet en route to Houston to pick up President Bush's father was hundreds of feet lower than it should have been when it hit a light pole and crashed, but federal investigators say it's too early to say what caused the wreck that killed three crew members.

The Gulfstream G-1159A plane went down early Monday about 3 1/4 miles south of a runway at Hobby Airport, officials said. The area was covered in thick fog at the time.

Mark Rosenker, vice chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, said the light pole clipped by the plane was 120 feet high and the normal altitude for the jet at that point from the runway would have been 1,000 feet.

The jet was to pick up former President George H.W. Bush, who lives in Houston, for a trip to Ecuador to give a speech at a business conference, his spokesman Tom Frechette said.

Rosenker said the agency's 15-person investigation team would examine "a number of factors," in-

cluding the condition of the aircraft, the weather and the history of the flight crew.

He said standard toxicology tests would be performed on the bodies of the two male pilots and one female flight attendant who died in the crash. Their names were not released Monday.

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the plane crash this morning," Bush said through Frechette. "I'll fly with this group before and know them well. I join in sending heartfelt condolences to each and every member of their families."

Rosenker said FBI agents joined the investigation, as is routine in all aircraft accidents. "We are treating this as a transportation accident. That's all," Rosenker said.

The plane, which belonged to Jet Place Inc. of Tulsa, Okla., came from Love Field in Dallas. It was approaching the runway when the wing and the landing gear on the right side clipped the pole on a tollway road.

The flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder were recovered, and appeared to be in good shape. The devices were shipped to Washington for analysis.

Baby's mother charged with murder

By LISA FALKENBERG

The Associated Press

PLANO, Texas — With a calm, dispassionate voice and a hymn playing in the background, Dena Schlosser confessed to the unthinkable, telling a 911 operator she'd cut off the arms of her baby girl.

The woman was sitting in her living room covered with blood when police arrived Monday. Her nearly 11-month-old daughter lay fatally injured in a crib in a bedroom of the family's apartment in Plano.

The child died shortly afterward at a hospital.

Police have charged the 35-year-old mother with capital murder, but declined to reveal where she is being held.

Schlosser, who had a history of postpartum depression, had been investigated on child neglect allegations earlier this year, but Texas Child Protective Services had recently closed a seven-month investigation, concluding that Schlosser did not pose a risk to her children. Neighbors said she seemed to be a loving, attentive mother.

"There were never any indica-

tions of violence with this family," agency spokeswoman Marissa Gonzales said, describing the children as healthy and happy.

But, on Monday, authorities discovered a grisly scene after the child's father called a day-care center and asked staffers to check on his wife and daughter.

Day-care workers called 911 after talking to the mother, who said she was an operator, then called Schlosser.

Asked if there was an emergency, Schlosser calmly responded "Yes," according to 911 tapes released by police.

"Exactly what happened?" the operator asked.

"I cut her arms off," Schlosser replied, as the hymn "He Touched Me" played in the background.

"You cut her arms off?" he repeated.

"Uh huh," she answered.

It was not immediately clear what instrument was used to sever the baby's arms or why the child's father called the day-care center. The name of the baby was not released.

Authorities said the two older daughters in the family, ages 6 and 9, were at school when police arrived, and that their father was at work.

No one answered the door Monday night at the family's apartment in suburban Dallas. Children's bicycles rested near the entrance along with angel garden statues.

Neighbors said Schlosser took her children swimming in the summer, had picnics in the courtyard and walked her baby around the complex the same time each afternoon.

Dena Livingston, 43, said she saw Schlosser making her rounds with the stroller on Sunday. Two days earlier, she saw Schlosser waiting with the baby stroller at the school her two other daughters attend.

"She didn't give off like she was in a distant world or didn't care about the baby," Livingston said.

Capital gears up for Christmas



Lynne Cheney, center, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney, waves with Peter Nostrand, president of Christmas Pageant of Peace Inc., right, and her grandchildren after they placed the star on the 2004 National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse between the White House and the Washington Monument on Tuesday. The official lighting of the 40-foot National Christmas Tree will take place Dec. 2.

CBS anchor Dan Rather says he will step down in March

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Dan Rather, embattled anchor of the "CBS Evening News," announced Tuesday that he will step down in March, on the 24th anniversary of taking over the job from Walter Cronkite.

The veteran anchor has been under fire in recent months for his role in a "60 Minutes Wednesday" story that questioned President Bush's service in the National Guard, which turned out to be based on allegedly forged documents.

Rather, 73, said he will continue to work for CBS, as a correspondent for both editions of "60 Minutes."

He made no mention of the Na-

tional Guard story in announcing the change, saying he had agreed with CBS executives last summer that after the Nov. 2 election would be the right time to leave.

"I have always been and remain a 'hard news' investigative reporter at heart," he said. "I now look forward to pouring my heart into that kind of reporting full time."

CBS did not mention a potential successor.

"He has been an eyewitness to the most important events for more than 40 years and played a crucial role in keeping the American public informed about those events and their larger significance," CBS Chairman Leslie Moonves said.

Feds nab 26 in alleged immigration fraud ring

BY MATTHEW BARAKAT
The Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — A fraud ring operating in northern Virginia helped more than 1,000 Indonesian immigrants file bogus asylum applications in recent years, federal prosecutors said Monday.

Sixteen people were arrested Monday and 10 more are facing federal charges, including asylum fraud and labor-certification fraud.

The defendants all worked for companies that charged immigrants \$2,000 or more to help them with fraudulent asylum claims or to improperly obtain labor certifications or identification documents like Virginia driver's licenses.

Applicants were coached to tell authorities they had been beaten or raped by Muslims in Indonesia

because they were ethnic Chinese or Christians. Their applications contained bogus accounts of abuse that were identical on multiple applications.

"The stories of torture they fabricated were repeated word for word by immigrants who were coached to memorize them exactly," said U.S. Attorney Paul McNulty. McNulty's office has made immigration fraud a priority since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, when it was discovered that seven of the 19 hijackers had fraudulently obtained Virginia driver's licenses.

The ringleader, prosecutors say, was Hans Gouw, 53, of Fairfax Station, an Indonesian citizen who himself was granted asylum in 1999.

Gouw and his sister — also an Indonesian citizen who had been granted asylum — were directors

of the Chinese Indonesian American Society, which purportedly sought to help Indonesians immigrate to the United States, according to a court affidavit.

The society regularly advertised in two U.S. magazines catering to Indonesians, with "customer representatives" across the country.

Gouw's lawyer, Dale Dover, declined to comment on the allegations Monday but said, "We appreciate the seriousness of these matters, and look forward to resolving the allegations."

Immigration officials said they will review the applications called into question and revoke asylum when appropriate.

Of the 26 facing charges, 23 were Indonesian, two were U.S. citizens and one is believed to be an Australian of Indonesian descent. Fifteen of the 23 Indonesians were granted asylum.



Photo courtesy of DVC

The Pentagon is reopening a controversial contract for Air Force refueling tankers to replace KC-135s, shown above, after a scandal involving an Air Force official giving special treatment to Boeing on multiple contracts. The official later took a job with Boeing.

Pentagon invites new competition for AF tanker contract

BY MATTHEW DALY
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has decided to reopen a controversial deal to supply refueling tankers to the Air Force, dealing a blow to the Boeing Co., which had expected to win the \$23 billion contract.

The move was expected. Congress killed a leasing aspect of the deal in a defense authorization bill last month in response to a growing scandal centering on a former Air Force official who admitted giving special treatment to Boeing on the tanker deal and other contracts.

The official, Darleen Druyun, had joined Boeing as a top executive. She has pleaded guilty to felony charges and was sentenced to nine months in prison. Boeing's former chief financial officer, Michael Sears, also has pleaded guilty for his role in hiring Druyun.

The Pentagon had planned to lease 100 modified commercial Boeing 767 jets to replace the Air Force's aging fleet of KC-135 tankers.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said in a letter to Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner, R-Va., that the department is studying a wide range of alternatives before proceeding on the tanker deal.

"After we have selected an appropriate alternative, we intend to require competition," Wolfowitz wrote. "No matter which alternative we choose, leasing is not an option without new congressional authority."

Wolfowitz's letter, published Saturday in the Congressional Record, was hailed as good news by critics who contend the original deal was structured in Boeing's favor.

"Competition doesn't mean Boeing doesn't get the contract. It just means taxpayers will get more bang for their buck," said Keith Ashdown, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense.

Boeing said it respected the Pentagon's decision and looked forward to the competition. European-based EADS, which owns most of Boeing rival Airbus, is expected to be the main competitor for the tanker deal.

"Backed by our 50 years of tanker expertise, the Boeing 767 tanker has already been selected by Italy and Japan," said Boeing spokesman



Doug Kennett. He said the Italian Air Force's first full-up 767 tanker will roll out in February and fly in March of next year.

Ralph Crosby, chairman and chief executive officer of EADS North America, said that if there is a competition for the tankers, his company will participate.

"We will team with a major American partner, expand our industrial footprint in the United States, employ American workers and pledge to offer the finest military capability for the United States Air Force at the best value to our taxpayers," Crosby said.

Wolfowitz's letter, dated Friday, essentially accepts an interpretation of the defense authorization bill offered by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., an Armed Services Committee member and fierce critic of the tanker deal. McCain said the bill breaks the Air Force's plan "back to square one" with a "full and open competition" required.

Congress makes room for more foreigners in high-tech industry

BY SUZANNE GAMBOA
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress is allowing employers to hire another 20,000 foreign high-tech workers under a special visa program after Congress rescinded the annual ceiling on the first day of the government's fiscal year.

Businesses are limited to hiring no more than 65,000 workers annually through the H-1-B visa program. They reached that figure in one day, Oct. 1, and immediately began complaining they would lose talented university graduates and potential employees to competitors overseas.

In response, as part of the \$388 billion bill passed over the weekend and awaiting President Bush's signature, Congress is exempting from the limit 20,000 for-

eign students with masters and above degrees from U.S. universities.

"This is a critical talent pool that American taxpayers have helped to educate," said Sandra Boyd, who chairs the Committee America coalition that lobbied for the exemptions. "It's counterproductive to educate these students and then force them abroad to compete against us."

The coalition includes companies such as Microsoft, Texas Instruments, Hewlett Packard and Motorola.

For example, of the 424 students who earned master's degrees in engineering at the University of Texas at Austin last year, 228 were foreign students, of the 135 who earned doctorates in engineering, 81 were foreigners, Boyd said.

Dan Kane, a spokesman for the Homeland Security Department's Citizenship and Immigration Service, said the exemptions for foreign students will be applicable this year. Rep. Lamar Smith, Texas Republican, and Sen. Saxby Chambliss, Georgia Republican, led the effort to include them in the spending bill.

Kane said his agency will release details on how employers can apply for visas made available after Bush signs the bill, he said.

The popular H-1-B visas are granted to foreigners in specialty professions such as architecture, engineering, medicine, biotechnology and computer programming. Under the program, employers must pay foreign workers the prevailing wage for their job fields and show that qualified U.S. workers are not being passed over.

Disputed San Diego mayoral race

SAN DIEGO — A retired judge refused Monday to intervene in the city's mayoral election, where Mayor Dick Murphy has claimed victory over a maverick city councilwoman who mounted a surprising write-in bid.

The judge said he was unlikely to grant a request forcing the county registrar's office to count all write-in ballots, including those on which voters failed to fill in the bubble next to Councilwoman Donna Frye's name. The judge also denied a request to block the registrar's office from certifying the results.

Eric Helgesen, a retired Tulare County judge, did not issue a final ruling, and it was not immediately clear when he would do so.

All 124 judges on the San Diego Superior Court bench were recused from the case last week because Murphy was a San Diego judge for 15 years before he was elected mayor in 2000.

Washington gubernatorial recount

SEATTLE — A federal judge scheduled a hearing next week to hear arguments in a lawsuit filed by Republicans aiming to block the recount of some ballots in the cliffhanger governor's race.

The Nov. 30 hearing would come two days before Washington is to certify results of the statewide race triggered by Republican Dino Rossi's razor-thin victory margin.

Election officials say the ballots in question — those that machines couldn't read — are being tracked and could be subtracted if the judge rules in the GOP's favor.

After all counties reported their tallies last Wednesday, Rossi led Democrat Christine Gregoire by 261 votes out of some 2.8 million ballots cast. State law requires a machine recount when the margin is less than 2,000 votes.

The recount began Saturday and is expected to wrap up Wednesday.

From The Associated Press

Thanksgiving travel may return to pre-9/11 level

By BRAD FOSS

The Associated Press

Consider these journeys: Dallas to Santa Fe, N.M.; Salt Lake City to Las Vegas; and Daytona Beach, Fla., to Washington, D.C. — in a car. These are the kinds of road trips some Americans are gearing up for as Thanksgiving approaches.

Even with gasoline prices almost a third higher than a year ago, 30.6 million people, or 3 percent more than in 2003, are expected to hit the road for a turkey dinner before the week is up. Another 6.6 million are likely to travel by plane, train or bus, adding up to what will be the busiest Thanksgiving for the transportation sector since 2000, according to a telephone survey conducted for AAA by the Travel Industry Association of America.

Thanksgiving is traditionally the peak business period for the airline industry, but passenger traffic fell sharply after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, accounting for the overall decline in holiday travel in 2001 and 2002. Auto traffic fell slightly in 2002 but, along with air traffic, has risen steadily since then.

Guillermo Font will drive his

Lincoln LS 1,600 miles from DeBary, Fla., near Daytona Beach, to the nation's capital and back, to spend the holiday with his daughter.

"I like to drive," said Font, a 71-year-old architect, who likes to "fool around" with his GPS system while listening to Latin ballads and classical music on the road. He figures on spending \$300 on road trip for gasoline (premium), food and an overnight stay in Lumberton, N.C.

Paula Silsby of Portland, Maine, said as long as there isn't a snowstorm she looks forward to the annual three-hour pilgrimage north to her parents' home in Ellsworth.

The 53-year-old Justice Department lawyer said she finds comfort in the ritual.

Not everybody has such a calm attitude.

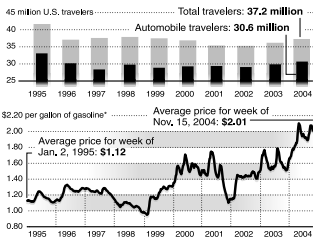
Suzi Eisinger, a health care consultant from Dallas who is flying to Fairfax, Va., said she is dreading the crowded airports



Eisinger

Possible pre-Sept. 11 level for travel

With 30.6 million expected to hit the road before week's end, and 6.6 million likely to travel by other means, this year may be the busiest Thanksgiving for the transportation sector since 2000.



and jammed security checkpoints. But she's doing what she can to minimize the stress.

"I'm going to get there early, I'll probably check in online to speed things up, and I'm getting dropped off at the airport so I

don't have to deal with parking," Eisinger said.

That's probably a good idea, since airport parking lots are expected to fill up quickly and pre-flight screening lines are likely to be longer than usual, industry offi-

cials said. The steep drop-off in air travel that followed the 2001 terror attacks has gradually been reversed and AAA says this will be the first year since then that total Thanksgiving traffic — estimated to be 37.2 million Americans — will exceed the level of 36.8 million set in 2000. The heaviest Thanksgiving travel — 41.6 million Americans — occurred in 1995, according to AAA.

The Transportation Security Administration, which oversees passenger screening, has set up a Web site that gives estimated wait times at every airport, <http://wait-time.tsa.dhs.gov/index.html>.

The Federal Aviation Administration said airports, runways and skies will be most crowded on Tuesday and Wednesday, with more than 51,000 flights each day.

That said, American, the nation's largest carrier, is advising travelers to get to the airport more than 90 minutes before flight time due to the anticipated long waits at security checkpoints and check-in. Travelers with bags to check should give themselves even more of a cushion.

Associated Press Writers David Koenig in Dallas and Debbie Hummel in Salt Lake City contributed to this report.

'Virgin Mary' sandwich sells on eBay for \$28,000

The Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — A woman who said her 10-year-old girl craved cheese sandwich before the image of the Virgin Mary will be getting a lot more bread after the item sold for \$28,000 on eBay.

GoldenPalace.com, an online casino, confirmed that it placed the winning bid, and company executives said they were willing to spend "as much as it took" to own the 10-year-old half-sandwich with a bite out of it.

"It's a part of pop culture that's immediately and widely recognizable," spokesman Monty Kerr told The Miami Herald. "We knew right away we wanted to have it."

Photos posted on eBay show what can be viewed as a woman's face emblazoned on the sandwich, a bite taken out of one end. Bidding closed Monday.

In a statement, GoldenPalace.com CEO Richard Rowe said he planned to use the sandwich to

raise money for charity. Kerr and Steve Baker, CEO of GoldenPalace.com's management company, Cyberworld Group, flew to south Florida on Monday to make arrangements for a sandwich handover from his owner, Diana Duyser.

"I would like all people to know that I do believe that this is the Virgin Mary Mother of God," Duyser, a work-from-home jewelry designer, said in the casino's statement.

The online auction site initially pulled the sale, saying it didn't post joke items. The page was restored after the company was convinced that Duyser would deliver on the bid, said eBay spokesman Hani Dury.

Duyser said she took a bite after making the sandwich 10 years ago and saw a face starting back at her. She put the sandwich in a clear plastic box with cotton balls and kept it on her night stand.

She said the sandwich has never sprouted a spore of mold.

Diane Duyser holds her 10-year-old girl's cheese sandwich that she says bears the image of the Virgin Mary in Hollywood, Fla. The online casino GoldenPalace.com confirmed that it placed the winning bid of \$28,000 on eBay.



AP



Thousands of people showed for a 30 minute free concert by U2 on Monday in Brooklyn, Monday in New York. U2 performed songs from their latest album "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb."

U2 plays surprise show in NYC

By SAM DOLNICK

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With the bright lights of lower Manhattan shining on the stage, the band U2 played a surprise outdoor concert in a waterfront park beneath the Brooklyn Bridge.

Although the MTV-organized show hadn't been publicly announced or advertised, thousands lined up Monday at the Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park, a riverside park between the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges and across from the New York skyline.

Most people said they heard

about the show through word-of-mouth or postings on U2 fans' Web sites.

The concert was for an MTV special called "mtvJAMMED: U2," set to air Dec. 10.

Led by frontman Bono, U2 played songs from its new album, "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb." Although the album wasn't scheduled to be released until Tuesday, many fans had already downloaded the songs and sang along with the choruses.

Deb Druitt, 47, left her home in Culpeper, Va., at 4 a.m. to see the concert. She met her daughter, Melissa, who was flown in from Los Angeles after winning a U2 raffle.

"It's totally worth it not to sleep at all and drive eight hours to be here," said Deb Druitt. "We're big fans."

Before the concert, U2 spent the day playing on the back of a flatbed truck that wound through city streets as a film crew shot the band for a new video.

When the waiting fans in Brooklyn saw the truck crossing the Manhattan Bridge with the band on board, they screamed and waved at the rockers.

"It was an incredible show," Zain Deane, 30, said after the band's 45-minute set. "It's the best. And there's nothing like the skyline at night."

New video games sparking anger, controversy

JFK assassination game called 'despicable' | S. Korea nixes game about U.S., N. Korea

BY JOSE ANTONIO VARGAS
The Washington Post

Is this going too far? "JFK Reloaded," after all, is an online game that deals with the John F. Kennedy assassination and was made available Monday — the 41st anniversary of the president's death.

To have players pretend to be Lee Harvey Oswald, crouch on the sixth floor of the former Texas School Book Depository with a rifle, and fire those three shots is bad enough. But, for the game's critics, it gets worse. It cost \$10 to play, and the company that created it is supposedly offering a \$100,000 "reward" for the player who re-creates the exact timing and angle of the shots that killed the nation's 35th president.

"It's despicable," says David Smith, spokesman for Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., the late president's brother. "We're not commenting further."

Learning more about the game isn't easy.

Traffic Management Limited, the Scotland-based company that created what it calls a "docu-game," hasn't uttered much either. Numerous calls made Monday seeking comment were not returned.

But the New York Daily News and the Associated Press Monday quoted Kirk Ewing, the managing director of Traffic, as saying, "This new form of interactive entertainment brings history to life and will stimulate a

younger generation of players to take an interest in this fascinating episode of American history. We've created the game with the belief that Oswald was the only person that fired the shots on that day, although this recreation proves how immensely difficult his task was."

The game capitalizes on the continued fascination with Kennedy's assassination in Dallas on a sunny fall afternoon in 1963. That day has been memorialized in best-selling books and popular films, including Oliver Stone's "JFK," which explored the conspiracy theories surrounding the event. The Warren Commission concluded in 1964 that the shots were fired from Oswald's gun.

Ian Bogost, the assistant professor in the digital media graduate program of the Georgia Institute of Technology, has watched the game's free demo and says he has played it.

Bogost, who also runs a year-old blog, watercoolerblogs.org — for "video games with an agenda," he says — finds the negative reaction hypocritical.

The game's Web site, JFKReloaded.com, is in the same vein, he says, as the first-person shooter game Kuma War. That game uses current topics — such as the Swift boat mission in Vietnam that won Sen. John Kerry a Silver Star and became a point of controversy in the presidential election — as a means for exploring head-line-grabbing issues, "another way to create a frame for understanding," Bogost says.

BY JOSEPH GIORONDO
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL — South Korea's Media Rating Board has refused to approve a new video game that bases its action scenarios on a U.S. conflict with North Korea.

As a result, the Korean company that was to distribute "Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 2" has decided not to release the game here. The game, ratings board members decided, goes "way too far" in its scenario.

"Ghost Recon 2," a first-person shooter game from Red Storm Entertainment, part of France-based Ubisoft Entertainment, was released in the United States this month on some platforms, and in the near future on others, including PCs.

The game is or will be available from numerous online retail outlets.

The game's scenario is rooted in a real-world, albeit somewhat unlikely, possibility. After a famine, a North Korean general diverts food aid to the military and slowly gains power. In response, China cuts off weapons sales and North Korea turns to Russia for a secret alliance.

The North Korean general takes over and invades China. Fearful of nuclear escalation, China seeks a multinational force to ease tensions on its border with North Korea. That's where the game player — part of the Special Forces "ghosts" — goes in. The mission: Take out the North Korean general and stop the advance. The scenario is an inverted version of the mission U.S. servicemen train for every day.

Instead of an invasion to the south, North Korea heads north.

When a preview of the game was shown at a Los Angeles video game exhibition earlier this year, it provoked the ire of the real North Korean leadership.

"Through propaganda, entertainment and movies, [Americans] have shown everyone their hatred for us," a North Korean government-run newspaper said. "This may be just a game to them now, but a war will not be a game for them later. In war, they will only face miserable defeat and gruesome deaths."

In an e-mail interview earlier this year, one of Red Storm Entertainment's game designers said the company seeks to create believable but fictitious story lines.

"When we developed the story background, we aimed at staying away from key current or specific events while still having a reasonable setting for a conflict," Christian Allen wrote. "Thus the idea of a famine that drives hard-line military members to start a conflict was chosen as our story line."

Past "Ghost Recon" settings have included the Georgian Republic, Ethiopia and Cuba, Allen wrote.

Game artists and designers do extensive research to ensure locations look and feel authentic, he said. A Chinese-American consultant helped verify authenticity, he said, and one of the game artists has a South Korean background.

Hwang Mae-rym contributed to this story.

E-mail Joseph Giorondo at giorondo@starsstripes.osd.mil

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OPINION

With GOP victory, last Powell army retreats

The Washington wars over foreign policy may not have ended, but one side is clearly in retreat.

The departure of Colin Powell from the State Department and the purge at the CIA are clear signals that the realist camp is receding.

Daniel Schneider



The ideologues and their two champions—Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld—stand triumphant.

The Bush administration has been fractured by the battle between these two camps. Advocates of diplomacy and alliances butted heads with fans of force and the unbridled exercise of American power.

Their policy war has taken place in very real ways. The realists lost the big one—the decision to go to war in Iraq. When it came to North Korea and Iran's nuclear weapons programs, the realists and the ideologues fought to a standstill, leaving the administration with no clear policy.

In the wake of the election, Powell, the anointed leader of the realist camp, went to the president and offered to stay on. He expressed "concerns" about the way national security policy has been made that, in the words of a senior State Department official, "may have sounded like conditions."

President Bush, however, had already taken sides. "The president basically wanted to clear this side of the house,"

the official told me.

Along with Powell, several senior officials will head out the door. Among them will be Powell's fiercest ally and deputy, Rich Armitage, as well as Assistant Secretary of State Jim Kelly, who runs East Asia policy and is the chief negotiator with North Korea. Others will follow soon.

With the notable exception of North Korea, the ideologues left Asia to the realists. That's why American relations with that part of the globe are a bright spot for the Bush administration.

The American strategic partnership with India has deepened, while Armitage and friends deftly managed to keep Pakistan an ally in the war against Islamic extremism. This test elevated our alliance with Japan to near-British levels. And they did it for the Bush administration.

The American strategic partnership with India has deepened, while Armitage and friends deftly managed to keep Pakistan an ally in the war against Islamic extremism. This test elevated our alliance with Japan to near-British levels. And they did it for the Bush administration.

Given all that, what does the replacement of Powell with Condoleezza Rice suggest? In policy terms, Rice has realist roots that are not that distant from Powell. But the former Stanford professor and Soviet specialist has been distinguished more during the past four years by her family-like ties with the president. She may have sided with Powell or with Cheney at different moments, but her allegiance is to Bush.

Powell has tried to reassure senior staff at State that having a secretary of State with

MR. PRESIDENT, I'M
TURNING IN MY
RESIGNATION AS
SECRETARY OF



that kind of intimate access to the president can be an advantage. And it is not unprecedented. Henry Kissinger also moved from national security adviser to Jim Carter during Nixon's second term. And Jim Baker went from White House insider to become George H.W. Bush's man at State.

But those precedents offer a cautionary note as well. Both Kissinger and Baker had little use for the State Department. They sat over there, along with a tight circle of aides, but did not empower the building. As Baker famously said, he was the White House's man in the State De-

partment, not the reverse.

Best case, Rice will draw upon State's well of expertise, particularly in areas such as Asia where she has little experience. But if I had to guess, the Rice era at State will be formed in the Baker mold.

Many at State have apparently reached the same conclusion. There have been a record number of retirements of senior officials this year, and a surge since Powell made his announcement. It is not yet a sinking ship, but they seem to be heading for drier ground.

Daniel Schneider is foreign affairs columnist for the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News.

Diplomatic service in for much-needed rude awakening

BY JAMES K. GLASSMAN

Stars and Stripes

Porter Goss, the new CIA director, is cleaning house. It's about time.

The next step is to apply his strategy—call it Gossification—to the rest of the federal bureaucracy.

Goss, an ex-CIA agent, had been chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, and he knew that the agency was a nest of mercy of spies but of devoted opponents of President Bush who were working to undermine him because they preferred to run their own foreign policy.

According to a recent column by Robert Novak, Goss got the green light from the president and from Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. "With leaks intended to harm the re-election campaign of the president of the United States," McCain said of the CIA, "it is not only dysfunctional but a rogue organization.... It has to be cleaned out."

Goss removed the head of clandestine operations. The No. 2 CIA official resigned, along with four other senior officials. The new director issued a memorandum, stating, "I also intend to clarify beyond doubt the rules of the road. We support the administration and its policies in our work. As agency employees we do not identify with, support or champion opposition to the administration or its policies."

The memo brought yelps of protest from CIA leakers and their friends in the press. But Goss was right. In fact, it's time to apply Gossification to other anti-Bush strongholds, notably the State Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

With the election of Bush to a second term, Republicans will hold the White House for 20 of 28 years; the Senate, 16 years; the House, 12 years straight. But this sea change has had little effect on the executive branch itself. There are just 3,000 politi-

cal appointees, compared with a civil service of 1.8 million workers, "many of whom," writes Washington Post reporter Dana Milbank, "are impossible to fire."

Presidential nominees take an average of eight months to be approved by Congress. Worse, many, at most, career civil servants at middle and upper levels resist implementing policies they don't like and do their best to shape their own.

Such bureaucrats often can't leave—because federal jobs attract people who believe in a missionary government and because Democrats controlled Washington almost continuously for a half-century. But the White House seems finally to be making bureaucratic transformation a top priority.

The next target has to be State. My brief experience on an advisory board examining public diplomacy revealed Foreign Service officers seething with contempt for Bush, whom they consider an uncultured, unilateralist doll.

One of the first tasks of the newly nominated secretary, Condoleezza Rice, must be to lay down the law, Goss-style, at State.

For help, I hope she'll take John Bolton as deputy. Bolton, now an undersecretary, is the architect of the Proliferation Security Initiative, which the Wall Street Journal said "has arguably been Colin Powell's most important achievement at State."

Bolton, who was earlier my colleague at the American Enterprise Institute, has served in the executive branch for 16 years, and he's a brilliant bureaucratic navigator.

Indeed, the White House should put someone like Bolton in the No. 2 post of every department and key agency, with explicit responsibility for rooting out administration opponents and gaining control of policy. How to do that when bureaucrats have the equivalent of academic tenure? Make their lives miserable, transfer them or re-educate them. But don't leave them in place.

Particularly in need of transformation are the Labor Department, which is practically a union local; Justice; Treasury; Education; the Food and Drug Administration; the Environmental Protection Agency; and the SEC.

In the past, activist Republican secretaries have gathered a coterie of like-minded political appointees and tried to run hostile departments on their own. But Bush's sweeping second-term policy proposals preclude a Fort Apache approach.

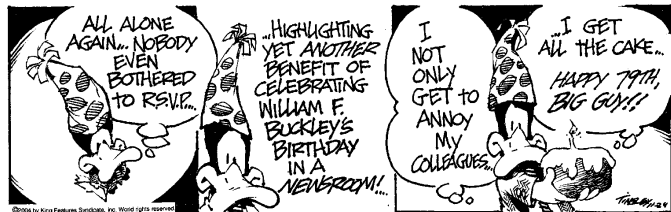
The attitude of many top bureaucrats can be summed up thus: "This is 'my' agency. The political is only renting a room for a while. I can ignore them and subvert them. Eventually, they will leave."

Such careerists won't be tamed easily. But the work needs to begin, and Porter Goss has shown the way. Other "rogue organizations," in McCain's felicitous phrase, are crying out for the same treatment.

James K. Glassman is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and the author of the Web site TechCentralStation.com.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



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IN THE WORLD

Hostages in Afghanistan freed

Three U.N. workers released after kidnapping, four weeks of captivity

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Three U.N. workers kidnapped in Afghanistan four weeks ago were released unharmed Tuesday, a day after a string of raids by U.S. and Afghan security forces.

The release was a relief to foreign aid workers and U.N. staffers among Kabul's 2,000-strong expatriate community, under virtual lockdown since the kidnapping. Large tracts of the country are already off-limits to relief workers because of a stubborn Taliban-led insurgency.

Philippine diplomat Angelito Nayan, British-Irish citizen Annetta Planigan and Shajpe Hebbi of Kosovo were seized at gunpoint from a U.N. vehicle on Oct. 28 in Kabul.

They were first foreigners abducted in the Afghan capital since the Taliban fell three years ago, and their abductions raised fears that the Afghan capital could become prey to the kind of deadly kidnappings by insurgents that have plagued Iraq.

"They are out," U.N. spokesman Manoel de Almeida Silva said. "I'm told they are in good spirits and they seem to be fine."

Afghan Interior Minister Ali Ahmad Jalali said the trio were "abandoned in one location inside Kabul" at around 6 a.m. Tuesday.

Jalali said discussions had been held with the kidnappers but insisted no deal was done and that the releases were unconditional.

"All those people who had a hand in this — directly or indirectly — will be brought to justice," he said. Jalali said it was "possible" that a Taliban-linked



Ruben Caronan, left, and daughter Alyne Marie, relatives of released hostage Angelito Nayan, are all smiles Tuesday after talking to reporters about their reactions in suburban Manila, Philippines.

group which has claimed responsibility for the kidnappings had hired some criminals to abduct the three, who helped organize the country's Oct. 9 presidential elections.

The foreigners were freed a day after U.S. and Afghan forces raided two houses in downtown Kabul on Monday and detained 10 people in connection with the abductions.

Threat closes U.S. consular office in Bombay

The Associated Press

BOMBAY, India — The U.S. Embassy closed its consular office in the coastal city of Bombay on Tuesday after receiving a threat of a possible terrorist attack.

"Although not specific, the information suggests that an attack could be aimed at U.S. interests in the cities of New Delhi or Bombay," said a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi.

It was not immediately clear why only the Bombay offices were closed. The embassy in New Delhi, and consular offices in Calcutta and Madras, would remain open, the statement said.

The U.S. Embassy, in an advisory to American citizens in India, said that based on information received by the U.S. government, "terrorists may be planning attacks on U.S. interests in India in the near future."

Facilities associated with the

United States or places frequented by U.S. citizens and other foreigners, including residential areas, business offices, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, and hotels, could be targeted, it said.

In Bombay, security around the American consulate was tightened after word was received of the possible terrorist strike, the city's police chief said Tuesday.

"We have alerted our agencies. We are geared up to deal with this," said A.N. Roy.

Reports: Officials in Britain thwarted 9/11-style attacks

BY THOMAS WAGNER
The Associated Press

LONDON — British security services thwarted planned Sept. 11-style terror attacks on Heathrow Airport and skyscrapers in Canary Wharf, a financial district of London, a television station and a newspaper reported.

But the reports, which quoted unidentified sources, did not say when or where the plots were uncovered, or how close they came to being carried out.

The plans to crash planes into the two high-profile targets were among four or five attacks planned by terrorists linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network that security chiefs believe they prevented, ITV News said Monday night and the Daily Mail newspaper reported in its Tuesday editions.

ITV News also said that British authorities had disrupted training programs for suicide pilots.

Officials at Britain's Home Office and Metropolitan Police in London refused to comment. A spokesman at Prime Minister Tony Blair's Downing Street office said: "We never comment on security matters."

The Home Office and Britain's MI5 domestic security service are responsible for protecting the country against terrorist attacks.

Heathrow is one of the world's busiest airports. Canary Wharf, on the River Thames in east London, is the second-largest financial district in the capital and its three skyscrapers are

home to companies such as Citibank and HSBC bank.

A year and a half ago, Blair was accused of alarmism when British troops in armored vehicles surrounded Heathrow Airport.

Blair's government insisted that the dramatic action came in response to specific intelligence.

Last summer, Pakistan gave British officials intelligence suggesting that al-Qaida had plotted to attack Heathrow airport. The information was found on the computers of two accused members of Osama bin Laden's terror network arrested in Pakistan. The computers held images of Heathrow airport.

On Nov. 8, the head of the MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller, said that counterterrorism efforts have helped to prevent attacks in Britain since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States. She provided no details about such operations, but she said that Britons face a "serious and sustained threat" of terror attacks at home and abroad.

Sir John Stevens, the commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, recently complained that he was not able to publicly discuss anti-terror successes for security reasons.

The ITV and Daily Mail reports came one day before Blair's government planned to outline its legislative program for the coming year, with crime and security likely to be the focus. Plans for a national identity card in Britain were expected to be announced.

Fatah party picks Abbas as presidential candidate

BY MAMMAD DARAGHMEH
The Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Interim Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas told parliament on Tuesday that he would follow in Yasser Arafat's footsteps and demand that Arafat recognize the "right of return" of Palestinian refugees.

Abbas spoke a day after a small group of leaders of the ruling Fatah movement chose him as its candidate in Jan. 9 elections for Palestinian Authority president.

The speech marked the first time since Arafat's death Nov. 11 that Abbas outlined his views on the conflict with Israel. Abbas appeared to be sending a message to Fatah's young guard that he would stand tough in future talks with Israel, despite his pragmatism and opposition to violence.

Abbas' ideas about a peace deal with Israel have always been close to those of Arafat: a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with east Jerusalem as a capital, and Israeli recognition of the "right of return" of some four million refugees and their descendants.

The refugee issue has contributed to the failure of previous peace talks. Israel has said it is willing to repatriate a few thousand refugees as a goodwill gesture, but that absorbing millions would destroy the Jewish character of the state.

At a memorial ceremony for Arafat at the Palestinian parliament, Abbas said he would walk in the footsteps of the late Palestinian leader. "We promise you (Arafat) that our heart will not rest until we achieve the right of



return for our people and end the tragic refugee issue," he said.

Palestinian legislator and the leader of a small leftist party also announced Tuesday that they are running for Palestinian Authority president, joining a growing field of candidates in the Jan. 9 race.

Palestinian legislator Hassan

Kreishneh, 46, an anti-corruption crusader and Arafat critic, said Tuesday he would seek the presidency. Kreishneh said he speaks for the "silent majority" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and hopes to find the middle ground between Fatah and Islamic parties.

Bassam Salhi, 44, leader of the People's Party, a small faction with communist roots, also announced his candidacy. Salhi headed the student council at the West Bank's Bir Zeit University in the 1980s and has a master's degree in international relations.

Ukrainian opposition leader claims victory in vote

Yushchenko takes symbolic oath of office in parliament

BY ALEXANDER VASOVIC
The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko defiantly claimed Ukraine's presidency Tuesday, taking a symbolic oath of office in parliament, as about 200,000 of his orange-clad supporters massed outside in the frigid streets of Kiev demanding the disputed election be returned. Yushchenko warned of "civil conflict" if he is not recognized as the country's new leader, accusing the government of rigging

Sunday's run-off in favor of pro-Kremlin Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.

On the parliament floor, after a special session, Yushchenko approached the podium and swore an oath on a 300-year-old Bible as lawmakers who watched him shouted, "Bravo, Mr. President!"

Outside, throngs of his supporters massed behind metal barriers, holding a giant orange ribbon over their heads. They chanted "Criminals,

go away!" and "Yushchenko!" Some waved signs reading, "Today or Never."

Earlier, Yushchenko led the crowds in a march on the building, turning Kiev's narrow, brick streets into a sea of orange — the color of his campaign.

A huge crowd jammed Independence Square for a second straight night. Snow fell as Yushchenko's supporters waved flags and signs and chanted his name.

Four trucks with sand, which presumably could be deployed as barricades, were parked near the main square.

Several other trucks loaded with sand and concrete rubble were parked about 400 yards from the square, as were two buses full of men, one of whom described them as "volunteers to protect the constitution and pre-

vent a coup d'état.

Ukrainian media reported that people from Donetsk, an industrial city in eastern Ukraine that supported Yanukovich, were being bused in to the capital.

"Ukraine is on the threshold of a civil conflict," the Western-leaning Yushchenko earlier told lawmakers in the chamber before he took office. "We have two choices: Either the answer will be given by the parliament, or the streets will give an answer."

The legislators had gathered for the emergency session to consider his request to annul the election results with a vote of no-confidence in the Central Election Commission, but it ended without taking any action. Only 191 lawmakers turned up, and support from at least 226 members of the 450-seat parliament was needed

for a motion to succeed. Many pro-Yanukovich legislators simply stayed away.

The parliament vote would have been nonbinding anyway because it was not initiated by the president, who supports Yushchenko's opponent.

Many of the legislators who did show up sported orange scarves or ribbons and urged him to take the oath of office. Yushchenko's supporters filled the gallery, chanting his name.

"All political forces should negotiate and solve the situation without blood," said Volodymyr Lytvyn, speaker of parliament, appealing for calm.

"The activities of politicians and the government ... have divided society and brought people into the streets," Lytvyn said. "Today there is a danger of activities moving beyond control."

IMF: Gulf currencies should remain pegged to U.S. dollar

BY ADNAN MALIK
The Associated Press

MANAMA, Bahrain — Gulf countries should continue to peg their currencies to the U.S. dollar to help ease the transition to a planned single currency in the region, an International Monetary Fund official said Tuesday.

Continuing to peg their currencies to the dollar would "leave public policy makers on already familiar grounds and facilitate the transition" to a single currency for the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries, said Mohsin Khan, IMF director for the Middle East.

Khan said once the new currency is adopted the countries could then consider a "cautious strategy" on exchange rate policy and possibly peg to other currencies, such as the euro, to promote growth.

In 2001, the six GCC countries agreed to adopt a single currency by 2010, similar to the euro in the European Union. They hope the move will boost trade and economic integration in the region.

The GCC is a loose political and economic alliance comprising of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Since most exports and financial assets of the GCC have been dollar-denominated, the peg has assured external stability, said Khan.

Khan, speaking at a GCC monetary conference, said the move to the single currency would be difficult but possible if the countries have the "political will" to do so.

"2010 is coming very quickly...and a lot of things have to be done," said Khan.

Bahrain's Central Bank Governor Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa said the GCC countries remained committed to the unified currency.

"We are now reaching a point of making some essential decisions on the convergence criteria," said Sheikh Ahmed. "The creation of a unified currency will greatly increase the area's attractiveness as a destination for foreign direct investment."

Dolphins shield humans from man-eating shark

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — A pod of dolphins saved a group of swimmers from a predatory 10-foot great white shark off the northern New Zealand coast, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

The unusual incident occurred Oct. 30 when lifeguard Rob Howes took his 15-year-old daughter Niccy and two of her friends swimming near the town of Whangarei. The Northern Advocate said.

The dolphins, "started to herd us up, they pushed all four of us together by doing tight circles around us," Howes told the newspaper.

When Howes tried to break away from the protective group, two of the bigger dolphins herded him back, he said.

Survey: Groping common among Tokyo trains

TOKYO — Nearly 64 percent of Japanese women in their 20s and 30s participating in a survey said they've been groped in trains and subways or at transit stations in Tokyo, according to a news report Tuesday.

Groping has long been a problem on Tokyo's crowded commuter trains and subways, particularly during rush hour.

In recent years "women only" cars have been used in December, when trains are often packed with drunken male office workers on their way home from company parties.

From The Associated Press



President Bush, left, looks over to Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, right, during a joint press conference at the Naval Academy on Monday in Cartagena, Colombia.

Bush vows to keep aid flowing to Colombia to battle drug war

BY TERENCE HUNT
The Associated Press

CARTAGENA, Colombia — Under a security web of warplanes, ships and 15,000 troops, President Bush praised Colombia's battle against drugs and Marxist guerrillas and pledged to keep U.S. aid flowing so "this courageous nation can win its war against narco-terrorists."

In a country that is the world's largest producer of cocaine and a major supplier of heroin, Bush said President Alvaro Uribe is achieving results with a massive aerial fumigation program against coca — the main ingredient in cocaine — and an aggressive military buildup against insurgents, who fund themselves through drug trafficking, kidnapping and extortion.

"The number of acres under cultivation are down significant-

ly," Bush said Monday, standing with Uribe in shirt sleeves at seaside lecterns. "The number of arrests are up. The number of murders is down. In other words, this man's plan is working."

Uribe said Colombia is winning the fight, but has not yet won.

"We have made progress but the serpent is still alive," Uribe said.

Bush left Cartagena for his Texas ranch to spend the Thanksgiving holiday, arriving in early evening. At Uribe's urging, he stopped off in this Caribbean seaport city after attending a summit in Chile of the Pacific Rim leaders. Security was tight.

U.S. Navy commandos, touting assault rifles and peering through binoculars, patrolled the Caribbean in rubber boats where submarines and ships already piled the waters. Warplanes and helicopters provided air cover while

15,000 Colombian security forces were deployed around the city for Bush's brief stay.

Bush was here to strengthen relations in Latin America, but he also responded to news from Iran, which claimed it had frozen all uranium enrichment activities. The United States believes Iran is developing nuclear weapons.

Sounding skeptical about Iran's claim, Bush said, "Well, let's say I hope it's true."

But unwilling to take Iran's word, Bush said, "Iran must allow for verification of its claims. I think the definition of truth is the willingness for the Iranian regime to allow for verification," the president said.

Since Uribe came to power two years ago, Plan Colombia has helped jail scores of traffickers and reduce the coca crop by 20 percent for two years in a row, according to the White House.

Pesky cell phones

NY CENTRAL ISLIP — A 17-year-old girl was sentenced to 21 days in jail for contempt when her cell phone rang after a judge warned everyone in the courtroom to shut off all electronic devices.

Mariela Acevedo was in court when District Court Judge Salvatore Alania issued his warning.

"If you don't know how to shut it off, go outside and introduce it to the heel of your shoe," he said, according to a transcript reported in Newsday.

When Acevedo's phone subsequently sounded, Alania asked the teenager, "Did you think I was playing with you?"

When she told him she thought it had been turned off, the judge sentenced her to 21 days.

Panhandler hit by truck

AL BIRMINGHAM — A truck driver gave a panhandler \$1, then struck and killed the man as he drove his rig away. Police said it was possible the driver didn't know what happened.

Michael Burns, 43, who had no known address, was standing near an interstate ramp and holding a cardboard sign: "Homeless. Need Help. God Bless."

Witnesses and police said a trucker who was stopped for a red light gave a dollar to Burns. As the truck started making a left turn, its trailer knocked Burns down, and two sets of the truck's tires ran over him.

The truck had no identifiable markings, and witnesses weren't able to get a tag number.

Officer Randall Ward said it appears to be an accident.

Not promoting porn

KS SALINA — A man spent a week on the roof of one of two adult bookstores in town to protest a movement to have the stores investigated for obscenity.

Ray Morris, 38, came down from his perch on top of Behind Closed Doors after staying in a tent there for a week.

"I can't stress enough that I am not promoting porn," Morris said. "I'm promoting the idea of choice. Everyone has a right to choose whether they want to enter these stores."

Some local residents are gathering signatures in a petition drive to force a grand jury to investigate whether Behind Closed Doors and another store, Priscilla's, are promoting obscenity by selling sex products.

Lost purse returned

WY CASPER — Two college students returned a lost purse to its owner, not knowing the handbag contained her life savings of \$43,000.

Derek Hepner and Adam Simanton spotted the purse lying in the gutter of a Casper street as they drove past it. Stopping to examine the bag, they pulled out a wallet and Arizona driver's license and immediately took the purse to police.

What they didn't see was an envelope containing \$43,000 in cash that was the owner's life savings, police Sgt. Larry Baker said.

The owner had been traveling through Casper and apparently



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

misplaced her purse during a stop, police said.

The woman phoned Hepner to inform him of a \$200 reward for the two Casper College students. Hepner is studying criminal justice, and Simanton plans to be a lawyer.

Birthday party death

NM LAS CRUCES — A junior at New Mexico State University died after his 21st birthday celebration led to alcohol poisoning, according to the university.

Steven Judd of El Paso, Texas, marked his birthday with other Delta Chi fraternity members at two Las Cruces bars, police Lt. Randy Lara said.

Fraternity members called for help after finding Judd unconscious and not breathing. He died the next day.

Lara said police have no evidence of foul play or hazing.

NMSU has begun an investigation and has informed the national Delta Chi organization of the incident, university spokeswoman Maureen Howard said.

Shortcut to the mall

VT SOUTH BURLINGTON — The city is opening an unpaved shortcut to the University Mall and Dorset Street to help ease traffic congestion during the holiday shopping season.



Nintendo is back

Shitiana Mathews, 14, right, and her sister Ty Mathews, 10, both of Los Angeles, try out the new Nintendo DS video game system prior to the first sales in North America at EB Games in the Universal CityWalk in Los Angeles.

The unpaved Market Street, an east-west street that connects Dorset Street with Hinesburg Road, will close again after the holidays because it is not in good enough shape to withstand the heavy snowfalling likely required in January, said City Planner Juli Beth Hinds.

Market Street is a key part of South Burlington's envisioned downtown. The city will hire a consultant to conduct a market study to show what type of development would be sustainable in downtown, which is bordered by Dorset Street, Hinesburg Road, Kennedy Drive and Williston Road.

Missile silos for sale

MO WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE — Warnings against digging more than two feet into the ground because of cancer-causing chemicals haven't stopped people from buying 130 of the 150 former missile silos the federal government is selling in Missouri.

The Air Force removed the solid-fueled Minuteman II missiles and destroyed the underground silos years ago, but the soil is still contaminated with fuel, asbestos and polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, found in waterproof coatings on the silos and underground fuel storage tanks.

Much of the property is being bought back by the farmers who owned the land before the government took it 40 years ago to install the silos.

Some farmers said they purchased the plots just to ensure that no one else grabbed them.

Tiger injures owner

FL ST. AUGUSTINE — The owner of a wildlife sanctuary was injured by a 350-pound Siberian tiger when the animal was startled by a 14-year-old boy, officials said.

Curt LoGiudice jumped between the tiger and the boy, who was uninjured but knocked to the ground with LoGiudice.

St. Johns County Sheriff's deputies had to shoot the animal twice with stun guns to get it to release LoGiudice, who kept his grip on the tiger's leash and was able to calm it down and take it back to his sanctuary before driving himself to a hospital.

LoGiudice suffered a puncture wound on one eye lid and behind one ear, according to the police report.

Girl sexually assaulted

MN HASTINGS — A man convicted of raping a teenage girl in 1994 has been charged with sexually assaulting a 9-year-old girl after a judge gave him custody of her last month.

Justin P. Farnsworth, 31, was charged with three counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct involving the daughter of his ex-girlfriend.

The ex-girlfriend, who lived three hours away in Minnesota, agreed last month that Farnsworth could keep the 9-year-old as well as the couple's two younger daughters, court records show. The three girls had lived with him for more than a year.

There is no indication that the younger girls were abused, said Hastings Sgt. Jim Rognotti.



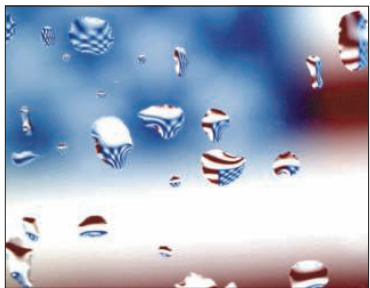
I see you...

A yellow Labrador retriever peers out a hole in the yard fence at a house in Baton Rouge, La.



Cleaning up

Ubaldo Rubio, left, and Ricardo Hernandez, employees of International Building Services in Atlanta, wash windows at the federal building in Oxford, Miss.



Patriotic reflections

Water droplets on a window reflect the American flag painted on the side of Artique Frame Palette on Market Street in Hannibal, Mo.



Dancing colors

Angelie Vasquez, left, and other members of the Millennia Dance Team, from the Fame Performing Arts Center, perform during the second annual Walk Thru The Arts at the Alliance for the Arts in Fort Myers, Fla.



Tall Teddy

Allison Fahrenholz, 4, poses for a photo with Corduroy the bear, a character from a children's book series, during Children's Book Week at the Penfield Public Library in Penfield, N.Y.



Behind the Brits

Tad Patton, 13, wears a mask with the flag of the United Kingdom during the Mobile International Festival at the Mobile Civic Center in Mobile, Ala.



Snow won't stop me

An ATV rider makes his way down a snow covered street in Yucaipa, Calif.

Let's flip for it

OR PRAIRIE CITY — A professional blackjack dealer had "Lady Luck" on his side when he won a coin toss to decide who would be the next mayor of this small ranching community.

Jim Hamsher, 39, and former mayor Paul Woodworth, 80, each received 125 votes Nov. 2 as write-in candidates for mayor of Prairie City.

Both candidates agreed to a coin toss to determine the winner.

Hamsher called "heads" as City Recorder Diane Clingman flipped a commemorative rodeo medal with a bucking horse on one side and the year on the other.

The horse landed up, giving Hamsher the victory.

Holiday free speech

RI CRANSTON — The holiday decorations display at City Hall that included more than a dozen plastic pink flamingos in Santa hats didn't break laws governing the separation of church and state, but Mayor Stephen Laffey's regulation of what was put in last winter's exhibit did violate free speech provisions, a federal judge has ruled.

Judge William Smith said he couldn't find any religious purpose in the mayor's decorating efforts, but did find that Laffey's policy of reviewing items for their appropriateness acted to restrain free speech, and therefore violated the First Amendment.

Last winter, Laffey encouraged residents to put seasonal displays he deemed appropriate on City Hall's front lawn. First a menorah went up, then an inflatable snowman and Santa Claus, and after that a Nativity scene appeared. Then, a flock of plastic flamingos showed up, courtesy of the Church of the Pink Flamingo.

Doctor charged in death

UT PROVO — A practitioner of alternative medicine who allegedly discouraged a woman with breast cancer from getting chemotherapy has been charged in her death.

David Eugene Pontius, 61, was charged with unlawful and unprofessional conduct for treating the woman for six months before she died Oct. 20. He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted on all three counts.

Diane Shepherd allegedly refused chemotherapy and surgery from her physician and instead relied on Pontius' holistic treatment after being diagnosed with cancer in April, according to court documents.

Pontius allegedly determined that Shepherd's cancer developed because of gangrene and mercury poisoning in her teeth. His treatment included chiropractic adjustments and a diet with apricot kernels.

Politics is for girls

LA BATON ROUGE — With his grandmother as an example, 4-year-old David Boulet sees the state's top job as women's work.

Gov. Kathleen Blanco told The Advocate of Baton Rouge that David Boulet, Monique Blanco Boulet, recently asked David what he

wants to be when he grows up. He wasn't sure, so Boulet offered some suggestions: Soldier? Firefighter? Policeman? Airplane pilot? None of them excited David. His mother finally asked, "Well, how about governor?"

David looked at her, exasperated.

"Mom," he said, "I'm a boy."

Asphalt scandal

IL CHICAGO — Federal officials charged a city employee with engineering a series of deals in which hundreds of tons of city-owned asphalt were traded for payoffs from private contractors.

In at least three instances, big loads of stolen asphalt were hauled to private jobs by drivers who were being paid by the city through a scandal-plagued program to outsource hauling jobs, federal prosecutors said.

Patrick Stillo, 50, the foreman of a city asphalt-expansion crew, was arrested and charged with bribery. He was released on a \$10,000 unsecured bond.

An FBI affidavit accompanying the criminal complaint quoted a truck driver who served as an undercover cooperating witness as saying Stillo authorized him to deliver city-owned asphalt to private contractors.

Booth letter sells big

MA BOSTON — A letter written by President Lincoln's assassin two months before the 1865 slaying sold at auction for a record \$68,000.

In the letter, dated Feb. 9, 1865, John Wilkes Booth asks a friend to send him one of his favorite pictures of himself, the one that later was used in his wanted poster.

The previous high for a Booth letter was \$38,000, according to Stuart Whitehurst, vice president of Skinner Inc. auctioneers.

There are just 17 Booth letters not owned by institutions, Whitehurst said. This letter was addressed to family friend Orlando Tompkins of Boston. He tells Tompkins he "will get any letter sent to Ford's Theatre."

Sport utility vandalism

CA LOS ANGELES — A graduate student was convicted of setting fire to dozens of sport utility vehicles in an attack by radical environmentalists that caused \$2.3 million in damage.

William Jensen Cottrell, 24, was found guilty of conspiracy and arson. The jury acquitted him of a more serious charge of attempting to use a destructive device — Molotov cocktails. That charge carried at least 30 years in prison.

He could get at least five years behind bars at sentencing March 12.

Cottrell, a doctoral candidate at the California Institute of Technology, was charged in a 2003 fire-bombing and vandalism spree at auto dealerships and homes in the San Gabriel Valley east of Los Angeles.

About 125 vehicles were damaged or destroyed. The vandals spray-painted polluter and "snog machine" on some vehicles, along with "ELF," for the radical environmental group Earth Liberation Front.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

He'll play only at home

Dennis Rodman is playing basketball again in a bid to return to the NBA, but for now he's not venturing far from his California home.

Rodman's debut with the Orange County Crush of the American Basketball Association begins next month. But his contract is only for home games.

Rodman, 43, "doesn't want to deal with all the hoopla that comes along with being Dennis Rodman when he travels," said Shaquille O'Neal, his publicist.

Still, the seven-time rebounding champion will leave home for some things: At the moment he's in Houston shooting a television commercial to be aired during the Super Bowl, Barr said.

The Crush has its first game Sunday but Rodman won't even start practice for another week to 10 days. The first home game is Dec. 9.

Motherhood's the prize

Diana Ross looked every inch the diva as she pulled up to Muncie College in St. Paul, Minn., in a black stretch limo and got out wrapped in a thick fur coat and wearing dark sunglasses.

Striding across a specially red carpet leading to the school door, Ross beamed as she accepted a bouquet of white roses and signed record albums held out for her autograph.

But inside the small music conservatory, where a new full scholarship was named in her honor Saturday, Ross told an audience of more than 100 students that it's not divaism that defines her—it's motherhood.

"I'm more a mom than I am a celebrity, even though I know you know me as a celebrity. I'm a mother first," she said.

Sidekick signs deal

Robin Quivers, shock jock Howard Stern's longtime sidekick, is making a solo move to wave television.

Quivers has signed a deal with Sony Pictures Television to develop a syndicated talk show for daytime TV, the company announced Monday.

The potential series could debut by fall 2005. Quivers will continue her work on Stern's radio show while developing her TV show, Sony said.

There was no indication whether she planned to remain with Stern if her show gets a green light. A call to her manager in New York was not immediately returned Monday.

Quivers, a former nurse in the Air Force who achieved the rank of captain, began her radio career in Washington, D.C., in 1980 and teamed with Stern the next year.

In October, Stern announced a deal with Sirius Satellite Radio to make his program in January 2006 from traditional broadcasting to satellite distribution—and away from regulation.

From The Associated Press

TOBY KEITH

Let's talk about him — the Oklahoma boy

BY JULIE E. BISBEE
The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Toby Keith didn't have to go to Nashville to become a country music superstar. Nashville came to Oklahoma.

Keith — who recently won two American Music Awards — has never strayed too far from his Sooner State roots, working long days in oil fields, playing semi-professional football and raising racehorses.

"Most artists moved to Nashville," Keith said recently, lounging on a leather couch in his tour bus. "I never did have an address there. I was there for one day and never felt the need for more."

Instead of traveling to the Tennessee country music mecca, he honed his craft in the whiskey halls and bars of the Southwest for nearly a decade.

Keith, whose hits include "I Wanna Talk

"Most artists moved to Nashville.

I never did have an address there.

I was there for one day and never felt the need for more."

Toby Keith

About Me," and "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American)," began playing guitar at age 8 after receiving one for Christmas. Later, he toured with his band Easy Money — in between playing semi-pro football for the Oklahoma Drillers and then a short stint with the Oklahoma Outlaws.

When the Outlaws failed and his football career was finally over, Keith put his energy into his music.

He toured 51 weeks a year, hitting honky-tonks and music halls from Oklahoma to Texas to Colorado.

"It was the only way we could make enough money," he said.

"Nothing ain't worth having if it's not worth fighting for. I was only going to do it for 10 years and it was getting pretty close."

But before he could quit and head back to the oil fields of Oklahoma, he got a deal with Mercury Records.

"They came to me," he says with a smirk. Keith put out three albums with Mercury before switching to DreamWorks, which allowed him the freedom to record the witty, occasionally redneck lyrics that have become anthems for country fans and non-fans alike.

Keith doesn't mince words when describing Nashville and the industry he says has reluctantly embraced him. Despite nearly two dozen country award nominations, he's only taken home a handful.

In 2003, the Academy of Country Music named him Entertainer of the Year — but he wasn't there to pick it up. Thinking his chances were slim, he left the ceremony to work on a song with Willie Nelson.

"The awards are kind of like the All-Star game," Keith said.

"You take your turn at bat, smile and give everybody the finger and leave."

That's Keith for you — honest and blunt. That grit translates into his drinking anthems, his ballads and his collection of post-Sept. 11, 2001, patriotic songs.

Keith has written nearly all the songs he's recorded and says he writes when he gets the inspiration.

"I'll do it for five minutes here, or I'll be thinking about while I'm in the shower," Keith said. "I never could write by appointment."

Straightforward lyrics and edgy guitar riffs have given him staying power.

"It was important everybody speak their mind," Keith said. "But if you're going to speak up, at least have something to say."

Recently, Keith's been talking about a lot more than music in his home state.

As a horseman, he championed a proposal recently approved by voters that expands casino-like gambling to the state's struggling horse racing tracks. Keith also stumped for a measure to create a lottery to fund public education.

"Everybody needs to try to make a difference and they have a responsibility to stay up on current events," Keith said. "I can be a difference-maker and I try to be."

Standing 6-foot-4 with blonde curls peeking out from his weathered cowboy hat, Keith was frequently seen on the campaign trail this fall. He's supported several Democrats, including Oklahoma

home Democratic Gov. Brad Henry.

"I campaign for my friends, people I can trust," said Keith, who is a registered Democrat in Oklahoma but nonetheless supported President Bush.

"I think Toby is passionate about Oklahoma and truly wants to make the state a better place," Oklahoma's governor said. "Instead of sitting on the sidelines, he's gotten involved in issues he believes are important."

Keith is keeping his wealth in Oklahoma. He and his family live near Norman, home to Keith's beloved University of Oklahoma Sooners.

His latest project is a \$4.7 million restaurant and music hall in Oklahoma City's fledgling entertainment district, Bricktown.

The venture, "Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill," will seat up to 600 people and is expected to be a stopping spot

for touring acts. Keith recently opened a similar bar in Las Vegas and plans for bars in North Kansas City, Mo., and Shreveport, La., are in the works.

"It's a great chance to help support Bricktown and what they're trying to do down there," Keith said. "The whole concept reflects my passion for Oklahoma and where everyone will feel comfortable."



Toby Keith performs Nov. 14 during the 32nd annual American Music Awards at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

Horoscope

The sun squares Uranus, and Venus times the revolutionary planet. A jolt could cause a degree of personal discomfort but may nonetheless be terrific for a relationship. The connection between raised levels of anxiety and passionate excitement cannot be denied. It's being unsure about what's going to happen next that makes love such a rush.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(November 24). Your talents are recognized this year. New partners in business are featured next month — your financial sector flourishes when you join a winning team. Loved ones bend over backward to make you happy through January, but it's when you reciprocate that you get an incredible influx of luck. Public mention boosts business in February.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

When the sun is shining down nicely on a relationship, it seems to you to be a good moment to provoke a storm. That's why loving you is such an adventure. Be aware of what you're doing and your motivation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

You've got nothing to lose by being optimistic, but being shy could damage your chance at succeeding in business. Anything to keep others from pigeonholing your talent will be lucky. An association with a Virgo is key.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Many new demands come into your world, and the old ones aren't going anywhere. The result is a glut of sorts. If you keep your optimism, people and events organize themselves without your having to figure it all out.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Just as the moon glows in the reflection of the sun, you glow in the reflection of someone who is a star in your life. Giving to someone else helps you know, and find a deeper love for, yourself.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

As your career lapses along at a sluggish pace, a friend's career may be taking off like a rocket. You would

benefit from marketing yourself differently, which may be complex or as simple as buying a spiffy jacket.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Stay out of the family drama. Don't even give an opinion! You're tight-lipped because you know those with loose lips lose friends. Unverified rumors, half-truths and innuendoes abound. Set the record straight.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

An opinion you hold that once seemed relevant — or necessary even — now appears to be dead wrong. No amount of convincing will make it right. Just drop it. Tonight, a love story will be whispered to you.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Receive as readily as you give! You could make a love connection by flirting outrageously. That pricey item you'd like to splurge on will come down in price if you just wait it out another few weeks.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

An irritation between loved ones need only last a few minutes, but it could go on all day if you let it. A happy resolution is at hand the moment you outline the problem and make a new agreement.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Winning is not as important as having fun. At work, a lot of talk flies around, and you are easily persuaded by what you hear. Consider the source. Someone is trying to get your attention with a subtle and lovely gesture.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Relationships take a tip down memory lane. A question once posed by fictional relationship columnist Carrie Bradshaw comes to mind: Can you get to the future if you stay in the present? You'll find out tonight.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

Self-determination is the key word. Think for yourself, and gain recognition as an independent problem solver. That doesn't mean you shouldn't stay in the loop, though! Take time to absorb the latest input from friends.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes



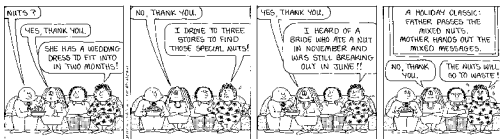
Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



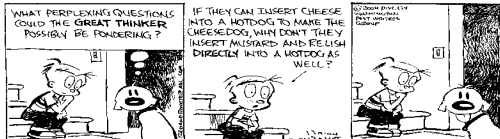
Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red Rover



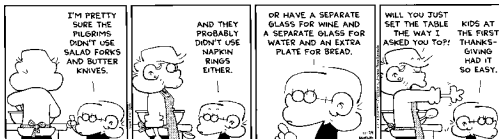
Better or Worse



Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



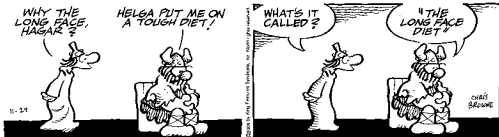
Blondie



Dilbert



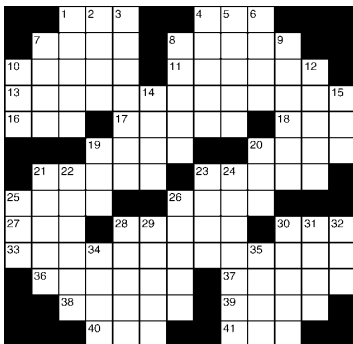
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

1 Concorde letters

4 — glance

7 "Fish Magic" painter

8 Profession

10 Physique

11 Shocked

13 Chairs, sofa, etc.

16 Exploit

17 Single-handedly

18 Bamir's aunt

19 "Boy! Did — a Wrong Number"

20 Unsignified (Abbr.)

21 Babe Ruth wore it

23 Green Party candidate

25 Pan foe

26 Drill

27 Completely

28 Cheer up

30 Samuel's teacher

33 It's often seen with 13-Across

36 J.R. Ewing et al.

37 Comes in last

38 Beetle with a beat

39 Eternally

40 General on

Chinese menus

41 Clinton's instrument

Down

1 Drudge

2 Big rig

3 Adolescent

4 Inert gas

5 Resort lake

6 Leading man

7 Barbara's "A Star Is Born" co-star

8 Pack to the future?

9 Ancient ascetic

10 Winter woe

12 Pavarotti, e.g.

14 Merriment

15 Panythos

16 Shade

19 Annoy

20 Lemon drink

series

21 Apartment sign

22 Cry out

23 Reply to the Little Red Hen

24 Cactus buds

25 Hedda Hopper trademark

26 — profundo

28 Commerce

Secretary Don

29 Jargon

30 County of England

31 Amorous gaze

32 — a Wonderful Life*

34 Freeway sign

35 PBS science series

Answer to Previous Puzzle



11-24

CRYPTOQUIP

K L G I A L G K B C P U X B C Q

H W K W A H K U J J W A U Q W B A P .

Q Y L I B C A H A C G P L H U K L W Q

Y L G X L P Q P Y B Q .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: SINCE DAD VERY MUCH DESPISES POETRY, I GUESS ONE MIGHT SAY HE'S AVERSE TO VERSE.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: Q equals T

Colorado athletic director resigns

BY EDDIE PELLIS

The Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — Colorado athletic director Dick Tharp resigned Monday, ending a nine-year tenure sullied by accusations of recruiting violations and fiscal mismanagement.

The resignation came just months after the school's football program was rocked by allegations that sex and alcohol were used to entice recruits, and lawsuits accused players or recruits of sexual assault.

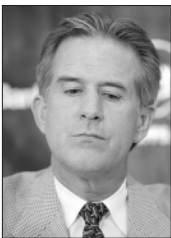
New allegations about fund-raising problems surfaced this month.

The school told the NCAA last week that a small border club that had not been audited under university auspices bought equipment for the athletic department, an NCAA violation.

Tharp said his resignation was not an admission of wrongdoing.

"The record will show that I performed my duties responsibly and in the best interests of the department of athletics and the University of Colorado," he wrote in his resignation letter.

A grand jury, an independent commission and the university in-



Colorado athletic director Dick Tharp resigned Monday, ending a nine-year tenure sullied by accusations of recruiting violations and fiscal mismanagement.

vestigated the recruiting and sexual abuse allegations. No sexual assault charges were filed, but one former recruiting aide was indicted on charges of soliciting a prostitute and missing his university cell phone.

The independent commission concluded that some players arranged sex, drugs and alcohol for recruits without the knowledge of coaches. The commission harshly criticized Tharp and other administrators, accusing them of lax oversight.

Also, three women said they were raped at or after a December 2001 off-campus party attended by players and recruits. The women sued the university; their lawsuits are pending in Denver federal court.

Former skating champion pleads guilty to gun charge

The Associated Press

ROCHESTER HILLS, Mich. — Former U.S. skating champion Christopher Bowman has pleaded no contest to two misdemeanors involving having a gun while drunk after prosecutors dropped felony charges against him.

Bowman, 37, entered the plea Monday before Judge Nancy Carnik in Rochester Hills District Court to possessing a gun while intoxicated and to assault and battery, the court clerk's office said.

Bowman, known as "Bowman the Showman," was U.S. champion in 1989 and '92. He finished seventh at the 1988 Olympics and fourth at the 1992 Olympics.

A count of felonies assault against Bowman was dismissed after the key witness changed her story with a letter stating what happened at Bowman's Lake Orion apartment on Oct. 7. Prosecutors also dropped a count of aiming a firearm with malice.

Initially, police said they believed that Bowman had pointed a handgun at April Freeman, a friend and business partner. Later, Freeman said she was under the influence of prescription painkillers when she gave her first statement and falsely accused Bowman of threatening her.

Bowman faces up to 93 days in jail when sentenced Jan. 17.

Mets finalize deal with Easley, move closer to re-signing Leiter

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Now that Kris Benson is definitely returning to the New York Mets, the right-hander hopes Al Leiter will be back, too.

"Al's been a tremendous help for me. He got me acclimated to the team when I got over here," Benson said Monday after taking a physical and finalizing his \$22.5 million, three-year contract.

New Mets general manager Omar Minaya would not reveal much about the Mets' talks with Leiter. On Friday, a baseball official who spoke on the condition of anonymity said the left-hander and New York were nearing agreement on a one-year contract with \$4 million to \$5 million plus performance bonuses.

"I don't want to comment too much because of where we are," Minaya said. "Where we are is sensitive to talk about what the thinking is on the Al Leiter front."

New York had been trying to re-sign Benson since he was acquired from Pittsburgh on July 30, two months before the Mets hired Minaya. The 30-year-old right-hander, taken by the Pirates with the first pick of the 1996 amateur draft, has been sidelined by injuries for much of his career — his 31 starts this year were his most since 2000.

Minaya called him "a pitcher who has not fulfilled his potential."

"I think we haven't seen the best of Kris Benson yet," Minaya said.

Benson went 4-4 with a 4.50



ERA in 11 starts with the Mets, leaving his season record at 12-12 with a 4.31 ERA and his career mark at 47-53.

His deal with the Mets calls for a \$2.5 million signing bonus and salaries of \$4.5 million in 2005 and \$7.5 million in each of the next two seasons. The Mets have a \$7.5 million option for 2008 with a \$300,000 buyout.

Yankees outfielder Sheffield to have shoulder surgery

NEW YORK — Yankees outfielder Gary Sheffield will have arthroscopic surgery Tuesday on his left shoulder, which didn't improve after two weeks of rehabilitation.

Sheffield, second to Anaheim's Vladimir Guerrero in AL MVP voting, didn't think the rehab went well, Yankees General Manager Brian Cashman said Monday.

"It was still experiencing problems," Cashman said.

Sheffield, 36, could not raise his left arm for much of the season and was forced to catch balls at his side. He will be operated on by Dr. James Andrews in Birmingham, Ala.

Kapler first to bolt World Series champions

BOSTON — Gabe Kapler became the first player to leave the World Series champion Boston

Red Sox, agreeing to a one-year contract with the Yomiuri Giants in Tokyo.

"He spent the better part of a week really agonizing over the decision," agent Paul Cohen said Monday. "He really felt at this point in his career, he wanted the guarantee to play."

Kapler, 29, was a backup on the Red Sox team that won the AL wild-card berth, then came back from a 3-0 deficit to beat the New York Yankees in the AL championship series. Boston swept St. Louis in the World Series, with Kapler going 0-for-2 and appearing in all four games.

Kapler, among 16 Boston players who became free agents, played in 136 games last season but started only 73 and hit .272 in 290 at-bats.

Easley agrees to \$750,000, one-year contract with Marlins

MIAMI — Backup infielder Damien Easley will get \$750,000 under his one-year contract with the Florida Marlins.

Easley, who agreed to the deal Monday, hit .238 with nine homers and 43 RBIs in 98 games for Florida last season while serving as a utility infielder.

Blue Jays sign C Myers

TORONTO — The Toronto Blue Jays signed veteran catcher Greg Myers to a minor league contract Tuesday with an invitation to spring training.

Myers, 35, is in just eight games before sustaining a season-ending ankle injury April 26 while running the bases in Minnesota.

Sports briefs

France's Pierce pulls out of Fed Cup semifinal

PARIS — Two-time major champion Mary Pierce pulled out of France's Fed Cup semifinal against Spain because of a right shoulder injury, the French tennis federation said on its Web site Tuesday.

France earlier lost its top player, former No. 1 Amelie Mauresmo, who said she wanted to concentrate on preparing for next season and a bid at winning her first Grand Slam title.

Pierce will be replaced against Spain by Marion Bartoli.

Hungarian discus thrower retires to avoid doping ban

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Discus thrower Robert Fazekas has temporarily retired to avoid a likely ban by the Hungarian Athletics Federation after being stripped of his Olympic gold medal for drug-test violations.

Fazekas did not want a ban by his country's athletic federation to prejudice an appeal he has filed with the Court of Arbitration for Sport about the loss of his medal, Gabor Pal, a spokesman for Fazekas, said Tuesday.

Fazekas said the CAS is expected to be heard in February.

BY JOSEPH WHITE

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Montreal Expos would be renamed the Washington Nationals if the proposed move of the franchise is approved by baseball owners.

The team's new colors would be red, white and blue, club president Tony Tavaras said Monday during a news conference at Union Station to announce the name change. Caps will have a script "W" and the team's secondary logo will feature an interlocking "DC."

"This is a thrilling and important change, restructuring the national pastime to the nation's capital," Tavaras said. "The team name and colors not only represent our new home, but symbolize the joining together of Washington's baseball past and its future."

Just before the news conference began, a member of the D.C.

Statehood Green Party went on the stage with a sign reading "Stop the \$614 million stadium giveaway." The protester, Adam Eidinger, opposes the plan by District of Columbia Mayor Anthony A. Williams to finance a ballpark for the team, saying it will cost far more than the estimated \$435 million.

Expos rechristened 'Nationals'



The Washington Nationals logo.

The Expos are owned by the other 29 teams, who plan to sell the franchise in 2005. The new owners may choose to rename the team again.

The Nationals was the official original name of the Senators franchise that played in Washington from 1901-60, although the team was known by both names for several decades. Owner Calvin Griffith officially changed the name to Senators in 1957.

Commissioner Bud Selig preferred the name Senators for Washington's new team, but the mayor objected because the District of Columbia does not have representation in the U.S. Senate.

Williams preferred the Grays, a tribute to the Homestead Grays Negro League team that played in Washington in the 1930s and 1940s.

"The Mayor on the Grays. Bud was on Senators," Tavaras said. "And I think you see a compromise candidate. But I don't want to sell it at that. I think it's a great name."

The team unveiled a red, white and blue logo with the word "Washington" on a red ribbon and "Nationals" on a blue field, then immediately began selling caps. T-shirts and pennants at a nearby kiosk. The uniform will be unveiled later.

Patriots push aside Chiefs

Brady, Dillon help depleted N.E. outscore Kansas City

BY DOUG TUCKER

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A beat-up Trent Green walked across the Arrowhead Stadium turf to shake Tom Brady's hand.

"You guys have a great team," the Kansas City quarterback told his New England counterpart. "I don't know how else to say it."

Whether they were on offense, defense or special teams, nothing the defending Super Bowl champion Patriots did seemed particularly spectacular. It was just solid.

Brady was especially effective, throwing for 315 yards in a 27-19 victory Monday night over the host Chiefs.

"Now I can see why they're 9-1," said Green, who threw for 381 yards and two touchdowns. "It's not as swagger or anything like that. They just feel really good about what they're doing."

Why shouldn't they? The defending Super Bowl champions have won 24 of 25 games.

Green completed a scoring strike to Eddie Kennison — a 65-yard pass that covered more ground than any the Chiefs have had in over a year. But it wasn't enough.

The Patriots took a 7-0 lead on their first possession when Corey Dillon scored on a 5-yard run, and wrapped up the win with an 11-play, 54-yard drive capped by Adam Vinatieri's 28-yard field goal with 1:46 to play.

In between, the Chiefs (3-7) failed time and time to wrest the momentum away.

"It's a tough place to come in



New England's Corey Dillon (28), stiff-arming Kansas City linebacker Kawika Mitchell (50), rushed for 98 yards and two TDs, but his fourth-quarter fumble deep in Chiefs territory kept Kansas City in the game.

here and play," New England coach Bill Belichick said. "I thought our players really did a good job of standing up to the adversity here, the hostile crowd and all that. These people really support their team."

Dillon wound up with 98 yards and two touchdowns on 26 carries.

Deion Branch caught six passes for 105 yards. Daniel Graham had a 48-yard reception, and David Patten had a 46-yarder.

"It's the first time I've had a chance to play against Brady," Chiefs linebacker Scott Fujita said. "He just carries himself real well. He sees defenses real well. You can feel the confidence in the whole team. It was impressive."

New England won its third straight since its NFL-record 21-game winning streak was snapped last month in Pittsburgh.

"We're still trying to improve," Brady said. "We left some points out on the field tonight. I think everyone's just glad we won this game."

The Patriots' defense also contributed by shutting down a Kansas City running game missing Priest Holmes, who was out for the second straight week because of a knee injury. The Chiefs gained just 64 yards rushing, exactly 100 yards fewer than their average coming into the game.

Derrick Baylock, who had 186 yards against New Orleans last weekend in his first NFL start, managed only 58 yards on 19 carries against the Pats.

"I thought we would be able to run it better than we did," Chiefs coach Dick Vermeil said.

Green also had a 26-yard TD pass to Kennison, as the Patriots played without starting cornerbacks Ty Law and Tyrone Poole.

The second score to Kennison came after Dillon, who also had a 1-yard touchdown run, fumbled at the Kansas City 3.

Green then drove the Chiefs 97 yards, capped by Kennison's 26-yard scoring pass. But a two-point conversion attempt failed.

Kansas City was poised to score at the end of the first half but Green's pass into the end zone to tight end Tony Gonzalez was intercepted by Rodney Harrison with 43 seconds left in the second quarter.

The Chiefs thought interference should have been called.

"You saw the play, didn't you?" Vermeil said when asked about the no-call. "I'm not going to say anything about it. It was a low throw and it shouldn't have been a low throw. It normally is high and to the back of the end zone or out."

NFL scoreboard

American Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	1	0	.900	254	171
N.Y. Jets	7	3	0	.700	212	165
Buffalo	4	6	0	.400	180	183
Miami	1	9	0	.100	140	210
South						
Indianapolis	7	3	0	.700	239	220
Jacksonville	6	4	0	.600	196	181
Houston	4	6	0	.400	186	239
Tennessee	4	6	0	.400	186	212
North						
Pittsburgh	9	1	0	.900	204	161
Baltimore	7	3	0	.700	204	140
Cincinnati	4	6	0	.400	183	158
Cleveland	3	7	0	.300	177	198
West						
Denver	7	3	0	.700	233	167
San Diego	7	3	0	.700	205	190
Seattle	6	4	0	.600	216	182
Oakland	3	7	0	.300	182	270

National Conference

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	9	1	0	.900	256	158
N.Y. Giants	5	5	0	.500	196	172
Dallas	4	6	0	.400	172	262
Washington	3	7	0	.300	131	178
South						
Atlanta	8	2	0	.800	208	194
New Orleans	4	6	0	.400	211	285
Tampa Bay	4	6	0	.400	176	182
Carolina	3	7	0	.300	136	222
North						
Green Bay	6	4	0	.600	256	230
Minnesota	4	6	0	.400	246	246
Chicago	4	6	0	.400	162	200
Detroit	4	6	0	.400	183	216
West						
Seattle	6	4	0	.600	230	185
Los Angeles	4	6	0	.400	176	214
Arizona	4	6	0	.400	177	214
San Francisco	3	7	0	.300	175	276

Sunday's games

Baltimore 30, Dallas 10	10	0	3	2-7
Buffalo 37, St. Louis 17	10	0	3	2-7
Indianapolis 41, Chicago 10	10	0	3	2-7
Philadelphia 24, New Orleans 13	10	0	3	2-7
N.Y. Jets 35, Arizona 7	10	0	3	2-7
Tennessee 18, Jacksonville 15	10	0	3	2-7
Minnesota 22, Detroit 19	10	0	3	2-7
Seattle 24, Miami 16	10	0	3	2-7
Tampa Bay 35, San Francisco 3	10	0	3	2-7
San Diego 23, Oakland 17	10	0	3	2-7
Atlanta 14, N.Y. Giants 10	10	0	3	2-7
Philadelphia 19, Cincinnati 6	10	0	3	2-7
Green Bay 16, Houston 13	10	0	3	2-7

New England 27, Kansas City 19

Seattle 24, Miami 16

Indianapolis at Detroit, Chicago at Dallas

Tampa Bay, Nov. 28

Tennessee at Houston

Washington at Pittsburgh

Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants

San Francisco at Tampa Bay

San Diego at Carolina

Jacksonville at Atlanta

New Orleans at Arizona

Seattle at Seattle

N.Y. Jets at Arizona

Baltimore at New England

Oakland at Denver

St. Louis at Green Bay

Monday

Patriots 27, Chiefs 19

New England 27, Kansas City 19

Kansas City 19, Patriots 27

First Quarter

NE—Dillon 50 (Vintieri kick), 10:29.

KC—Fitzpatrick 47, 7:47.

KC—Kennison 65 pass from T.Green (Tynes kick), 3:41.

Second Quarter

NE—Dillon 1 run (Vintieri kick), 8:27.

KC—Fitzpatrick 37, 3:52.

Third Quarter

NE—Fitzpatrick 24, 6:45.

KC—Kennison 26 pass from Brady (Vinatieri kick), 4:54.

Fourth Quarter

KC—Kennison 26 pass from T.Green (pass failed), 6:13.

NE—Fitzpatrick 28, 1:45.

A-78431.

NE NC

First downs 21 20

Total Net Yards 407 417

Rushes-yards 32-98 28-64

Passing 309 363

Turnovers 1 1

Red Zone Returns 5-9 6-15

Penalties 12 10

Time of Possession 27:59 32:01

Missed Field Goals—None.

RUSHING—New England 126, Chiefs 76.

PASSING—New England 177, Chiefs 165.

RECEIVING—New England 6-105, Chiefs 6-105.

GRADING—New England 1-14, Chiefs 1-14.

RECEIVING—New England 1-14, Chiefs 1-14.

RECEIVING—New England 1-14, Chiefs 1-14.

R. Moss targeting a return this week

The Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Randy Moss is expected back in the field this week for the Minnesota Vikings, provided his strained hamstring doesn't swell.

Coach Mike Tice said Monday a reasonable plan for Moss in Sunday's game against Jacksonville is three plays, mostly in 25-receiver formations.

Since sustaining the injury Oct. 17 at New Orleans, Moss twice made return appearances without catching a pass and did not dress for the past three games.

Moss, who has been running routes on the side for the past week, looked good in an intense workout Monday morning to test his strength and endurance. Tice and team trainers want to make sure the leg doesn't swell from Tuesday before allowing him to practice.

He'll be listed as doubtful, for now.

"Hopefully as the week progresses we'll be able to fix that and turn it into questionable, probable," Tice said. "We'll see."

Pro Bowl cornerback Matt Birk, who has been playing with intense abdominal pain, might

NFL injury update

Injuries to prominent NFL players, followed by team's prognosis. (See Friday's edition for complete injury report provided by the league.)

Browns OT Ryan Tucker (torn knee ligament) out for the season; QB Jeff Garcia (shoulder) day-to-day.

Colts S Bob Sanders (sprained knee ligament) out 3-4 weeks; SS Mike Dixon (groin) probable.

Packers RB Walter Williams (sprained ankle) likely out for Sunday; RB Adrian Peterson (sprained ankle) likely out for Sunday; RB Brian Westbrook (sprained ankle) likely out for Sunday; RB Brian Westbrook (sprained ankle) likely out for Sunday.

Seahawks QB Matt Hasselbeck (high bruise) questionable; CB Chad Brown (arthritis) close surgery; out up to 6 weeks.

Titans CB Andre Woolfolk (dislocated wrist) out for the season; OT Brad Hopkins (broken hand) out for Sunday; DT Albert Haynesworth (dislocated elbow) unlikely to play Sunday.

have to sit out a game or two next month to let the injury calm. He's expected to play against the Jaguars, though.

Leftwich: I'll start this week at Minnesota

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Byron Leftwich expects to return to the starting lineup Sunday when the Jacksonville Jaguars play at Minnesota.

But coach Jack Del Rio, isn't so sure.

"Unless we have a major setback, I believe

I'll be playing this week," said Leftwich, who has missed the past two games with a knee injury. "The key is not to go out there and just jump at it."

Del Rio said Monday he's taking a more patient approach.

"He threw a couple passes last week in practice and appears to be on track to be able to return this week," Del Rio said. "I know Byron is anxious to get back. I'll know more as we get closer to retaining."

Harrington retains starting job for Lions

ALLEN PARK, Mich. — Another lackluster game has not cost Joey Harrington his job as starting quarterback.

Harrington was 12 of 19 for 91 yards with one touchdown and one interception in a 22-19 loss to Minnesota.

"I know that we came unraveled as a team toward the end of that game, but that was not all Joey Harrington," Lions coach Steve Mariucci said Monday.

Though Harrington has thrown just two touchdowns and three interceptions in the past three games, Mariucci said he did not plan to replace him with backup Mike McMahon.

Life without Lewis

Ravens face more adversity as star RB might miss game at N.E.

BY DAVID GINSBURG

The Associated Press

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — The Baltimore Ravens have become accustomed to overcoming injuries and off-the-field problems this season, so there was no sense of panic upon learning that running back Jamal Lewis could miss this week's game against the New England Patriots.

Lewis hurt his right ankle during the first quarter of Sunday's 30-10 victory over the Dallas Cowboys and did not return. He underwent tests Monday, and his status will be determined this week.

Cow coach Brian Billick said it's possible that Lewis, who ran for 2,066 yards last year, could be lost for two weeks. He would be replaced by Chester Taylor, who filled in earlier this season while Lewis served a two-game suspension for violating the NFL's substance-abuse rules.

Soon after Lewis left Sunday, third-stringer Musa Smith broke his right leg and was lost for the season.

If Lewis can't play, Baltimore will proceed without him. That's the stance the Ravens

took during his suspension, and that's how they've dealt with injuries to tight end Todd Heap, linebacker Peter Boukvar, cornerback Chris McAlister, offensive tackle Jonathan Ogden, nickel back Deion Sanders, defensive tackle Kelly Gregg, receiver Travis Taylor and center Mike Flynn.

"Our mantra has been, the next man's got to step up," Billick said Monday. "At some point, you keep thinking it's going to even out and we're not going to have to address that from one week to the next, but so far that hasn't been the case."

Lewis returned to the sideline in the second half Sunday and volunteered to back up Chester Taylor, but Billick decided not to use Lewis unless he was needed. He was not, mainly because quarterback Kyle Boller picked apart the Dallas defense.

Although Boller has gone three straight games without throwing an interception and went 23 for 34 for 232 yards against the Cowboys, Billick is worried about a running game that gained only 59 yards on 21 tries Sunday. Taylor was limited to 33 yards on 15 carries after Lewis got only 5 yards on two attempts.



Chester Taylor, middle, will be the centerpiece of Baltimore's running game if 2003 rushing champ Jamal Lewis (ankle) is unable to play.

"We're not running the ball as well as we need to, and that's a concern," Billick said.

Injuries are part of the problem, but there is no solution for that.

"You can say that as soon as it's all settled down, then we'll be able to get back to running the ball the way we have," Billick said. "Well, it's not going to settle down in the near future."

Ogden returned Sunday after missing three games with a hamstring pull.

McAlister (shoulder injury) and Sanders (toe) are expected to return against New England. Heap will likely need one more week to recover from the

spined ankle that has kept him sidelined since Sept. 19.

During Heap's absence, reserves Darnell Dinkins and Daniel Wilcox have performed well. Dinkins had three catches for 40 yards and a touchdown against the Cowboys, and Wilcox ranks fourth on the team with 17 receptions.

That's one reason the Ravens (7-3) have their best record ever after 10 games. Their final six games include road games against division leaders New England, Indianapolis and Pittsburgh.

"The equation has always been win at home — and we've been pretty good that way — and we've got to steal something on the road in the next three games," Billick said. "One or all, but at least one."

Seahawks' Robinson suspended four games

BY TIM KORTE

The Associated Press

KIRKLAND, Wash. — Seattle Seahawks receiver Koren Robinson was suspended without pay Monday for the next four games for violating the NFL's substance-abuse rules.

Robinson will sit out home games against Buffalo and Dallas, as well as games at Minnesota and the New York Jets. He is eligible to return for Dec. 26 for a home game against Arizona.

NFL career receiving leader Jerry Rice, who started and had three receptions for 86 yards and a touchdown in Sunday's 24-17 victory over the Vikings, will take over Robinson's position.

"You just have to keep going," Rice said. "Koren is a great receiver. We wish we had him coming back this week. We've got to have all the guys fill in and somehow keep this ship afloat."

Robinson was at team headquarters Monday, but declined comment.

He isn't expected to address the suspension or speak to reporters until he's eligible to play.

"I don't know he can come back and overcome this and be the player he can be," Rice said. "I have never seen a guy with so much size and so much speed and so much ability. I'm just going to keep working with him and hopefully it rubs off on him."

Robinson also sat out the Miami game, but coach Mike Holmgren said that was punishment for violating undisclosed team rules and was not related to the NFL suspension.

Holmgren acknowledged Robinson traveled to New York last week on an off day for Seahawks players to attend a suspension.

This isn't Robinson's first brush with trouble.

The ninth overall pick of the 2001 draft, Robinson was suspended for a game at Arizona last season after missing a team meeting. In February 2003, he was arrested outside a bar in Raleigh, N.C., for failure to disperse.

Holmgren has joked in the past that he instead digital clocks throughout the building at Seahawks headquarters to help Robinson report to meetings on time.

"It's very disappointing to see wonderful potential lost like that," Holmgren said Monday. "Is he going to rebound off this? Yes, but this is a missed time. You just want the lights to go on for some of these young guys and have them understand how fortunate they are to be doing what they're doing."

Robinson has slumped in his fourth NFL season, catching 31 passes for 495 yards with two touchdowns. He also has been plagued by dropped passes — a recurring problem for Seattle's receivers.

Robinson appeared poised for a breakout after his second NFL season, when he started 16 games and had 78 receptions for 1,240 yards, ranking second to Steve Largent's club-record 1,287 yards.

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Mularkey shrugs off charges of dirty play

BY JOHN WAWROW

The Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Mike Mularkey is shrugging off St. Louis coach Mike Martz's accusations that Buffalo players took cheap shots during their victory over the Rams.

"Based on what I saw, I don't understand the comments that came from him," Mularkey told reporters Monday. "I'll leave it at that. I don't see what he saw."

Mularkey declined to go into a debate with the Rams coach over his complaints following Buffalo's 37-17 win on Sunday.

"He's got his opinions, and I don't understand them," Mularkey said.

Martz was unhappy after the Rams lost three cornerbacks to injuries, accusing the Bills of intentionally trying to hurt his players by going after their knees.

Starting cornerback Travis Fisher and backup DeJuan Groce both left the game with knee injuries and did not return. Another backup, Kevin Garrett, did not return after sustaining a concussion.

A replay showed Groce had his legs cut from under him from behind by Bills offensive lineman Ross Tucker. It happened while Groce was blocking during Fisher's interception return in the first quarter.

In addition to his complaints during a postgame news conference, Martz raised the point while

shaking the hand of Buffalo defensive coordinator Jerry Gray.

"Two corners, to the knees, from behind," Martz was overheard telling Gray. "You'll see it on the tape."

Rams receiver Torrey Holt also accused Bills cornerback Nate Clements of going after his knees during a cut block on a running play. Holt came up hobbling and missed at least one play.

On Monday, Martz backed off his criticism of Clements.

"There's nothing much you can do about that, I guess. It angered me, but it's legal," Martz said in St. Louis.

But hours later during his radio show Monday night, Martz was angry.

"I won't live long enough to play him again. I can tell you that," Martz said, adding that the hit on Holt was as cheap as anything he'd seen. "Clearly, it's an intent to injure him."

As for the hits on his cornerbacks, Martz earlier said, "What are you going to do? That's just the way they play the game. There's no more to be said, really."

Mularkey would only describe Clements' hit on Holt as "physical football."

Clements was unavailable for comment Monday, when Bills players were off. Clements' agent, Neil Cornrich, did not respond to phone or e-mail messages left for The Associated Press.

AP Sports Writer R.B. Fallstrom in St. Louis contributed to this report.



Vikings fans hold a sign promising no beer throwing, an apparent reference to the melee in Detroit between the Indiana Pacers and the Detroit Pistons.

NBA has a bad connection

The NBA's problems cut deeper than image, go further than the fighting in Detroit, and can't be solved simply by suspensions.

Commissioner David Stern made a start by swiftly dishing out strong punishment to all the players involved in the worst brawl with fans in league history.

Those suspensions were right on target, even if the players' association and Indiana Pacers disagree and succeed in shortening them.

It would be easy to dismiss this incident as an aberration, to point to the thousands of other games that have been played without similar problems. But to do that would be to ignore the steady ratcheting up of player-fan hostility in all sports and the underlying issues that are particular to the NBA.

The NBA can trot out figures that would dispute any notion of its decline: solid attendance, steady TV ratings, lucrative sponsorships and advertising deals, strong licensing revenues, broader interest worldwide.

Yet it would be a mistake for Stern to take smug satisfaction in that and try to patch over the current flare-up with the suspensions and some beefed-up security.

There is a growing disconnect between many fans and the NBA, whose American players, perhaps more than those in any other sport, are perceived as arrogant, selfish and overpaid. Those images were reinforced this summer by the U.S. team at the Athens Olympics.

Though there are surely many players, perhaps the majority, who don't fit that characterization, the attention drawn by the likes of Latrell Sprewell, Allen Iverson, Ron Artest and, during the past year, Kobe Bryant, have weighed heavily on the league.

Steve Wilstein



popularity among white fans and surged among black fans, according to research by the Sports Marketing Group in Atlanta.

In a nationwide study of Americans in 1993, 62 percent of whites said they loved or liked the NBA. By 2003, that dropped to 50 percent. Viewed a different way, whites who said they hated or disliked the league rose from 21 percent in 1993 to 30 percent in 2003.

By contrast, the percentage of black Americans who loved or liked the NBA rose from 62 percent in 1993 to 92 percent a decade later. Blacks who hated or disliked the league hardly changed, going from 4.3 percent to 2.9 percent.

The NBA should study those figures without drawing the wrong conclusions. They don't suggest any resentment by whites against the league simply because the majority of players are black. Nor do they suggest that the league would have fewer problems if more players were white.

Larry Bird took some heat last season when he said that a few more white superstars would be "good for a fan base because... the majority of the fans are white America." He was probably right, though Stern disagreed.

In 1993, the NBA was coming off the success of the original Dream Team at the Barcelona Olympics. Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan were as popular

among whites as blacks. Charles Barkley, for all the controversy he stirred and the elbows he threw, was a likable player with a sense of humor. Race wasn't a big issue then.

What the numbers suggest is that many white fans have been turned off by some high-profile players. There's a sense that too many are jumping straight from high school, tattooed and bejeweled, and that they have an attitude of entitlement along with huge egos.

As salaries, ticket prices and cable/satellite charges rise, the resentment is growing.

That, in part, is why so many Americans were glad to see the U.S. basketball team get its comeuppance in Athens. It is also, in part, what drives fans to scream epithets at players during games.

When players break the rules or the law, fans react with repugnance. When Sprewell chokes a coach or complains that he needs more millions to feed his family, he doesn't just turn off fans, he infuriates them. When Artest and the other Pacers went into the stands throwing punches wildly, no matter the provocation from a few idiotic fans, they reinforce a sense of players out of control.

Stern needs to make all the players understand what's at stake — the league's integrity. The issue now is no less critical to the NBA than the cocaine problems of the 1980s.

If NBA teams can't restrain themselves from drafting players out of high school, they should at least make an effort to give them extra counseling and encourage them to continue their education in the offseason.

Stern can't afford to ignore any idea that will take the NBA off its self-destructive path.

Steve Wilstein is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at: swilstein@aig.org

Artest says penalty ending year unfair

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Pacers forward Ron Artest said Tuesday he wishes he hadn't gotten into a fight with fans but feels his season-ending suspension was too harsh.

"I don't think it was fair — that many games," Artest said in an interview with NBC's "Today" show. "I respect [NBA Commissioner] David Stern's decisions, but I don't think I should have been out for the whole season."

It was Artest's first national interview since he was suspended for fighting with fans late in Friday night's game against the Detroit Pistons. The interview was simulcast on RadioNow 93.1 in Indianapolis.

On Sunday, Stern suspended Artest for the rest of the season and gave four other Pacers shorter bans, including Stephen Jackson (30 games) and Jermaine O'Neal (25 games). All suspensions stemming from the fight are without pay. Artest, who was suspended for a total of 73 games, stands to lose nearly \$5 million this season.

Artest bolted into the stands after being hit by a cup thrown by a fan, touching off a brawl in which players exchanged punches with fans, who also threw drinks, got a chair and other debris at the Pacers.

"I wish that situation never happened," Artest said. "It wasn't good at all, for anybody..."

"This is the third time that I've been hit with something out of the crowd," said Artest, who claimed he had been struck previously in Detroit and in Cleveland.

Artest said Monday night that he hoped to be back with the Pacers for the playoffs, despite the suspension.

"I have so much confidence in my squad and I have confidence I'll be back," Artest said on local radio station WHHH. "I'm out for the season, but I'm hoping to be back for the playoffs."

Union director Billy Hunter said it would have been appropriate for the NBA to suspend Artest through the All-Star break in February and require anger management counseling.

"I think 35 games would have been appropriate. I think 73 is excessive," Hunter said on "Today."

The union was preparing to file an appeal with Stern, who has sole discretion over penalties for on-court behavior.

During the televised interview, Artest played a new CD from a group on his record label three times and wore a T-shirt and hat emblazoned with the logo of True Warrior Records.

Artest said he had no ill will toward Detroit's Ben Wallace, who got things started when he shoved Artest after a foul late in the game.

"Wallace just had a death in the family, so I'm understanding," he said Monday night on WHHH radio in Indianapolis.

Unapologetic Wallace accepts suspension

BY LARRY LAGE

The Associated Press

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — Detroit's Ben Wallace will not appeal the six-game suspension the NBA gave him for his involvement in Friday night's brawl with the Indiana Pacers and fans.

"When things like that happen, you've got to protect the league," Wallace said Monday, the day after NBA Commissioner David Stern suspended nine players for their part in the melee. "You can't have guys going out reacting the way we did."

The brawl started when Indiana's Ron Artest fouled Wallace from behind with the Pacers leading by 15 with 45.9 seconds left. It quickly escalated when Wallace retaliated by delivering a hard, two-handed shove to Artest's chin.

After the players were separated, a fan hit Artest in the face with a full cup, and he ran into the stands to confront the fan, he thought hit him. The fracas later spilled onto the court, where Artest punched one fan and teammate Jermaine O'Neal slugged another.

Wallace, who said Saturday he didn't regret anything he did, was

asked again whether he wished he had done anything differently.

"Any time you have a chance to stop and look at the situation and see what happened, you could say you could've done this different or that different," the two-time All-Star and defensive player of the year said. "But in the heat of the moment, things happen."

"We're all human. We react different under different circumstances. It was one of those things that was unfortunate."

The NBA suspended Artest for the rest of the season, Stephen Jackson for 30 games and O'Neal for 25.

Does Wallace feel any compas-

sion for Artest? "Life is too short to be feeling sorry," he said. "Things happen and you've got to be responsible for your actions. I don't feel sorry for him."

Wallace can practice with the Pistons during his suspension, but can't be in any arena they're playing in for the next seven to within two hours of a game or during it.

Wallace will be eligible to return next week. The \$6 million he will lose \$400,000 of the \$6 million he was due to make this season.

Spurrier set to take over for Holtz at South Carolina

By PETE IACOBELLI
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Steve Spurrier is set to take over at South Carolina after coach trustees agreed Tuesday to hire the former Florida coach.

Spurrier replaces Lou Holtz, who resigned Monday. The school scheduled a news conference for Tuesday afternoon to formally introduce Spurrier.

Spurrier would return to college football after a three-year absence. He was coach of the Washington Redskins for two seasons after leaving Florida, going 12-20 before resigning. Spurrier won the 1996 national championship and six Southeastern Conference titles while with the Gators.

The 61-year-old coach met with the Gamecocks on Tuesday morning. Players said Spurrier told them he wanted to bring fun back to the game.

Spurrier's hiring had been expected for nearly a week.

There was much speculation that Spurrier would return to Florida next season, following the recent firing of Ron Zook. But Spurrier pulled out of the running, saying 12 years at the school was probably enough.

Next season, Florida is scheduled to play at South Carolina on Nov. 12.

Spurrier, 59, went 20-13-1 in three seasons at Duke before taking over at Florida, his alma mater, in 1990. He posted 122 victories over 12 seasons, tormented opponents with his offensive flair and witty one-liners, and departed with the best winning percentage in league history.

The 67-year-old Holtz kicked things off Monday, on one of the strangest days in South Carolina football history. Holtz made official what he hinted about for weeks, and retired after 33 seasons.

Then came the news that South Carolina and rival Clemson, both 6-5, would forego bowl bids because of a brawl late in the Tigers' 29-7 victory Saturday.

Holtz leaves with 249 victories, eighth-most in Division I-A, and a reputation for turning stumbling programs into winners. At each of his six schools — William & Mary, North Carolina State, Arkansas, Minnesota, Notre Dame and South Carolina — Holtz went to bowl games with his second season.

His greatest accomplishment came in 1988, when he led Notre

Dame to the national title only three seasons after the disastrous Gerry Faust era ended.

"Lou Holtz has been one of the great coaches in college football history," said Florida State's Bobby Bowden, the winningest coach in Division I. "He has brought a lot to the game and has coached some great teams. It will seem strange without him."

His latest reconstruction project at South Carolina was nearly as remarkable. He came out of retirement in 1998 at age 61 to rebuild the Gamecocks. After going 9-11 his first season in Columbia, Holtz brought South Carolina to its best two-year mark in history (17-7) and won consecutive Outback Bowls.

"I don't know where I'm going to go. I don't know what I'm going to do. I have faith in the Lord to let him lead me. As long as my family's with me, everything else will be OK," Holtz said.

"But I do feel confident leaving here that the football program is on a firm foundation." Spurrier will try to build on Holtz's work.

Holtz didn't mention good friend Spurrier by name Monday, but said his replacement "was a well-known, proven winner ... that I play golf with."

Outsiders clouding bowl picture

By WENDELL BARNHOUSE
Knight Ridder Newspapers

Rarely has the Bowl Championship Series provided this kind of intrigue. Inactive, yes. But not intriguing.

The outcome of Friday's Texas-Texas A&M game could be nationally significant inside the Lone Star State. The Rose Bowl is sweating enough to irrigate a ... rose garden. And the possibility of two — yes, "two" — non-BCS teams qualifying for BCS bowls is incalculable.

Intriguing, right?

Week Six of the BCS standings had Utah as a solid No. 6, Boise State at No. 7 and Louisville at No. 10. There have never been three non-BCS teams in the top 10 in any previous week of the BCS standings.

The 11-0 Utes appear to be a lock to earn an at-large bid to a BCS game because the rules say any non-BCS team ranked sixth or higher gets an invitation. The rules also say if two non-BCS teams are ranked sixth or higher, both get the two BCS at-large bids.

"We've got three teams that are very close to breaking through," Big 12 Conference commissioner and BCS coordinator Kevin Weiberg said Monday. "We don't see that as a bad-news story. I think it's confirmation that the system hasn't been limiting in any way."

For Boise State or Louisville to move into the top six, both would need teams above them to lose. No. 4 Cal plays at Southern Miss on Dec. 4. No. 5 Texas plays at Texas A&M on Friday. No. 8 Miami (Fla.) plays Georgia Tech on Dec. 9. 9 Miami (Fla.) plays Virginia Tech on Dec. 4.

It would take a perfect storm for all of those BCS-ranked teams to lose, but it's possible.

If both Utah and Boise State finish in the top six to earn BCS at-large bids, the Rose Bowl would be unable to invite California and stage the traditional game between Pac-10 and Big Ten teams (Michigan will represent the Big Ten in Pasadena).

There were reports over the weekend that the



Boise State could create more problems for the BCS by joining Utah as non-BCS teams in the bowl lineup.

Rose Bowl was planning to invite Cal no matter where the Bears end up ranked. Non-champions from BCS leagues that finish No. 3 or No. 4 in the final BCS standings are guaranteed an at-large bid (assuming there aren't two at-large bids going to non-BCS teams finishing in the top six).

Texas appears unable to catch Cal in the BCS standings. But if that happens or if Cal loses to Southern Miss and stays in the BCS top 12 (and, hence, eligible to be selected as an at-large team), would the Rose ignore the rules and select Cal over a Texas team ranked No. 4?

"I've heard those reports, but I think the Rose Bowl understands the selection rules, and they would adhere to them," Weiberg said.

Until the scores become final on Dec. 4, the intrigue will continue.



Quarterback Aaron Polanco has directed Navy to its second straight bowl game. The Mids will play in the Emerald Bowl on Dec. 30.

Navy accepts offer from Emerald Bowl

The Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Navy accepted an invitation to the Emerald Bowl, putting the Midshipmen in the postseason in consecutive years for just the second time in school history.

Navy (8-2) will play either New Mexico (7-4) or Wyoming (6-5) of the Mountain West Conference, athletic director Chet Gladchuk said Monday.

It will be Navy's 11th bowl appearance. The Middies lost to Texas Tech in last season's Houston Bowl.

"These young men have earned this through their dedication in the weight room and on the practice field," third-year coach Paul Johnson said in a statement.

A victory over Army (2-8) on Dec. 4 would give Navy nine regular-season wins for the first time since 1963.

The Emerald Bowl, which pays \$750,000 per team, invited Navy after Emerald Bowl Executive Director Gary Cavalli met Sunday with Gladchuk.

"Navy's got a heck of a football team, a national following and has a great television audience and brings a lot of pageantry to our game," Cavalli said. "Navy has the whole package, and the way they played against Rutgers was the caper for me."

The game will be played on Dec. 30 at SBG Park in San Francisco.

■ Purdue accepted a bid to the Sun Bowl on Tuesday, the third time in four years the Boilermakers will play in the New Year's Eve game.

Purdue (7-4, 4-4 Big Ten) will likely face either No. 18 Arizona State (8-2) or Oregon State (6-5) in the game in El Paso, Texas.

Clemson, South Carolina not going to bowls after brawl

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Clemson and South Carolina will not accept bowl bids, punishment for players who brawled toward the end of Saturday's game.

South Carolina athletic director Mike McGehee said Monday that the Gamecocks' actions on the field were not consistent with the values and ethics of the school.

"This decision will have a sig-

nificant financial impact on USC athletics. We will also lose a month of prebowl practice," McGehee said. "It was a decision that had to be made."

Clemson athletic director Terry Don Phillips said in a statement the decision isn't fair to the majority of the players.

"But given the circumstances, I believe strongly that it is the right decision so that our university, our student-athletes, supporters and all people that love Clemson know without question what our values are," he said.

Both teams qualified for the postseason with 6-5 records.

Fox lands BCS games

NEW YORK — Fox will be the new television home of the Bowl Championship Series.

The network and the BCS announced a four-year, \$320 million deal Monday that gives Fox the broadcast rights to the Fiesta, Orange and Sugar bowls from 2007-10 and the national title game from 2007-09.

ABC has held the broadcast rights to the BCS since college football's major conferences implemented the system to crown a national champion in 1998.

ABC withdrew from the bidding last week, with network officials saying they were unhappy with the new BCS structure, which added a fifth game.

Ron Turner fired by Illinois

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Ron Turner was fired by Illinois on Monday after three straight losing seasons, a sharp turnaround from early success that included the team's first Big Ten football title in a decade.

Illinois went 3-8 this season and has just one conference victory the past two years. Half of the Illini's four wins overall the past two seasons were against Division I-AA opponents.

Turner and two seasons left on his contract.

Turner went 35-57 record with two bowl trips in eight seasons at Illinois. But since a Sugar Bowl appearance in January 2002, Illinois is just 9-25, and attendance has been falling.

Wake Forest worthy of new No. 1 ranking

Demon Deacons in control all the way vs. Yale

The Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Wake Forest's first game at No. 1 seemed just like the ones they played this season when ranked one spot lower.

Chris Paul, Eric Williams and Kyle Visser each scored 15 points to lead the Demon Deacons past Yale 99-72 in their debut at the top of the poll on Monday night.

"The games still feel the same," Paul said. "You have to play the same teams. I can understand if it was the end of the season, but we're only three games into the season so it really doesn't mean much."

Chris Ellis added 14 points for the Demon Deacons (3-0), who had five players in double figures. They had little trouble on offense in the first half and maintained a comfortable lead against the Bulldogs (1-2) throughout.

Earlier Monday, Wake Forest climbed into the top spot of The Associated Press Top 25 for the first time in school history. The Demon Deacons jumped past Kansas from No. 2 after the Jayhawks trailed much of the way in their season-opening 68-61 win against Vermont.

Wake Forest had been ranked No. 2 for 12 weeks — 10 during



Tim Duncan's senior season of 1996-97. The total was the third highest for a school that hadn't reached No. 1.

Paul, the preseason All-American point guard, said the game against Yale was "business as usual."

Wake Forest's first game at No. 1 was marked by a solid opening half that produced a 17-point lead at the break. Nine players scored in the first 14 minutes, with the Demon Deacons scoring 58 points and shooting 48 percent.

No. 3 Georgia Tech 60, Illinois-Chicago 59: Luke Schenscher made a pair of free throws with 25.9 seconds left, B.J. Elder hit three three-pointers in the final nine minutes and the Yellow Jackets survived a scare in Chicago.

The Flames (0-1) had a chance to win, but freshman Kevin Bond missed a free throw with six seconds left and Justin Bowen's last-second jumper sailed wide of the basket. Still, it was a spirited effort by the Flames, who haven't beaten a ranked team since Dec. 12, 1989, when they upset No. 25 Michigan State.

Elder led the Yellow Jackets (2-0) with 17 points, and Jarrett Jack and Isma'il Muhammad added 10 each. Cedrick Banks led all players with 23 points, including five three-pointers.

No. 9 Duke 74, Davidson 61: At Charlotte, N.C., Daniel Ewing scored 16 of his 19 points in the second half and sparked two big runs for the Blue Devils.

Duke (2-0) beat Davidson for the 18th consecutive time, but nearly blew a 20-point lead in the second half and struggled to put the Wildcats (1-1) away.

Brendan Winters scored 24 points for Davidson, which trimmed Duke's lead to four with 5:39 to play. Logan Kosmalski had 25 points and 13 rebounds. J.J. Redick added 18 points for Duke, and Shelden Williams and Sean Dockery had 15 each.

No. 11 North Carolina 86, Brigham Young 50: After missing the season-opening loss to Santa Clara because of an NCAA suspension, junior guard Raymond Felton returned to anchor North Carolina's defense in an easy victory over Brigham Young (0-1) in the opening round of the Maui Invitational.

With Felton back in the paint, North Carolina (1-1) opened the



Wake Forest's Taron Downey, left, steals the ball from Yale's Eric Flato during the first half in Winston-Salem, N.C., on Monday.

game against BYU (0-1) with a 25-3 run and led by as many as 39. Sean May had 18 points and eight rebounds.

Iowa 76, No. 12 Louisville 71: At Lahaina, Hawaii, Jeff Horner scored 11 points in a 4½-minute span of the second half, part of a nine-minute stretch when Iowa (2-0) held Louisville (1-1) without a field goal in the opening round of the Maui Invitational.

Horner finished with 18 points and six assists.

No. 15 Texas 84, Chaminade 62: At Lahaina, Hawaii, Texas withstood foul trouble and the three-point shooting of Chris Reeves.

P.J. Tucker had 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Longhorns (2-0). Reeves, a junior college transfer, made his first six three-point attempts, finished 8-for-10 from long range and scored 33 points for the Division II Silverswords (1-1).

Without last year's stars, Hawks flying under radar

Saint Joseph's eyeing fifth straight A-10 title

By DAN GELSTON

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Put away that highlight video. Put down the scrapbook. Learn how to pronounce Abdul-Jabbar.

A whole lot has changed on Hawk Hill since last season, when Saint Joseph's was the talk of the college basketball world. No more Jameer Nelson. See you later Delonte West. Twenty-seven straight wins to open the season? Probably not.

The wins and achievements might not be as numerous as last year's 30-2 season that ended in the NCAA regional final, but coach Phil Martelli still feels he has a tournament team.

"We're still playing basketball here. We haven't packed up the balls," said Martelli, starting his 10th season. "What we did last year may never be seen in this city again, but I like our team. We won't be compared to what we did last year."

Nelson and West have moved on to the NBA, but the talent cupboard certainly isn't bare. The Hawks return enough tournament-tested players to fatten their schedule against a lackluster non-conference schedule — not including Tuesday's opener at No. 2 Kansas.

Saint Joe's was picked to win the East Division in the Atlantic 10.

"I don't see it as a challenge, I see it as an opportunity," Martelli said.

There's opportunity for the Hawks to make more history, also.

They would have to win only the second team in A-10 history to win five straight conference titles. Another tournament bid would make it the second time Saint Joe's



Saint Joseph's coach Phil Martelli doesn't expect his team to duplicate its 27-game win streak and NCAA Regional Final berth of a year ago; a fifth straight A-10 title would be accomplishment enough. "We won't be compared to what we did last year," Martelli said.

played in three straight NCAA tournaments.

"We'd like to be part of that history," Martelli said.

Saint Joe's will begin its season without Pat Carroll, a senior guard and the lone returning starter who averaged double digits in scoring. Carroll has been bothered by a shoulder injury sustained last month in practice.

The other returning starters are both in the frontcourt, 6-foot-11 center Dwayne

Jones (6.4 ppg, 7.2 rpg) and 6-7 forward John Bryant (3.0 ppg, 3.7 rpg). While Saint Joe's big-men combo was not asked to do much offensively last year, the players will have to improve to take some of the pressure off an inexperienced backcourt.

The soft and undersized frontcourt really stood out against Oklahoma State in the NCAA regional final, when the Hawks were outscored 42-24. No surprise, considering the opposition outscored the Hawks by over 100 during the season.

After a two-year stint as Nelson's backup, Dwayne Lee will run the offense and freshman Jalloh — that's AB-Doo-LEE JALL-oh — takes over West's spot at shooting guard.

Lee has played 60 games the last two years, but started none and averaged only 1.6 points in 7.8 minutes. Lee knows there will be obvious comparisons to Nelson, but insists he can't worry about putting up All-America numbers.

"It's important for me to go out there and not try to live up to any standards because I'm my own player," Lee said. "It's important for me to go out there and lead this team. There's a little pressure, but I try not to think about it. I just want to go out there and do the things I know I'm capable of doing."

Jalloh, recruited as a point guard, was hooked on the Hawks even before last year's incredible season. Jalloh said he's working on playing with a "humble confidence" and the Hawks are a perfect fit.

"This is a humbling school," Jalloh said. "We don't have anything that's flashy or high tech. That's one thing a lot of us overlook — humility. I saw the gym and said this is the place I've got to be."

So far, the Hawks have practiced in relative anonymity. The national attention the magazine covers and debate over where this team fits with the basketball powerhouses will likely be gone.

That's OK with Martelli, who's quick to mention his program was pretty successful, even before people caught on to what was happening at Hawk Hill.

"What drives us is what drives every one of my teams, maximize today's opportunity and let's see where we are at the end of the year," he said.

SPORTS



Navy headed to bowl
for second straight year,
Page 30

Rumble leaves rubble

Pacers were contenders, now playoffs are in doubt

BY JON KRAWCZYNSKI

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — After receiving some of the harshest penalties in NBA history for one of the worst brawls in U.S. sports history, the Indiana Pacers' deep and talented roster has been reduced from a title contender to rubble.

The Pacers lost more than 62 percent of their scoring when Ron Artest was suspended for the season, Stephen Jackson for 30 games and Jermaine O'Neal for 25 for fighting with Detroit Pistons fans on Friday night.

Combined with myriad injuries to key players, that leaves the likes of Fred Jones and Austin Croshere to carry the load until the team gets healthy and O'Neal and Jackson return.

The Pacers' leadership expressed unequivocal support for all three suspended players on Monday and said the losses haven't changed their goals for a season that began with championship aspirations.

"We don't care who puts on a uniform," coach Rick Carlisle said. "There's a standard here. When you put on an Indiana Pacers uniform, you're expected to perform at a certain way at a certain level. That's what we expect from all these guys who haven't necessarily been star players."

Pacers CEO Donnie Walsh called the melee a low point for pro sports and the franchise.

"We apologize for our part in it," Walsh said.

Artest bolted into the stands after being hit by a cup thrown by a fan, touching off a

brawl in which players exchanged punches with fans, who also doused Pacers with drinks, popcorn, a chair and other debris.

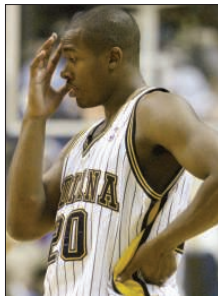
Jackson joined Artest in the stands, swinging wildly, while O'Neal remained on the floor and punched a fan who came onto the court.

O'Neal and Artest have also apologized for their roles in the brawl, but Anthony Johnson said his five-game suspension was "excessive."

"I never went into the stands; I never left the court area," Johnson said. "People certainly can see what the conditions on the floor were like. The chaos speaks for itself."

Now the Pacers are trying to move forward and salvage a season that began with so much promise.

SEE RUBBLE ON PAGE 28



Pacers guard Fred Jones had 31 points in Saturday's loss. With 62 percent of the team's scoring lost to suspensions, Jones is among the players Indiana will have to count on to reach the playoffs.

Patriots keep piling up victories



Chiefs tight end Tony Gonzalez (88) is tackled by Patriots defenders Ted Johnson (52) and Eugene Wilson (26) during the first half on Monday night. New England was unspectacular but beat Kansas City 27-19 for its 24th win in 25 games. See Page 26 for details.



Wake looks like
the No. 1 team
in handling Yale

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Spurrer hired
to take over
at South Carolina

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Ravens might be without RB Lewis for game at New England Page 27